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Trump: Military will build wall if Dems refuse

BY MATTHEW DALY

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump sought Tuesday to pressure Democratic congressional leaders into supporting his demand for billions of dollars to build his promised wall along the U.S.-Mexico border, threatening to have the military build it "if Democrats do not give us the votes to secure our Country."

Trump tweeted the threat hours before Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer and House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi were to meet with Trump at the White House in an effort to avert a possible partial government shutdown on Dec. 21, when funding for some agencies is scheduled to expire.

In a series of tweets Tuesday, Trump said immigration and border patrol agents and thousands of active-duty servicemembers he sent to the border have done a "FANTASTIC" job. But he said "A Great Wall would be, however, a far easier & less expensive solution."

Trump said he looked forward to meeting with Schumer and Pelosi, but claimed they don't want border security for "strictly political reasons."

"If the Democrats do not give us the votes to secure our Country, the Military will build the remaining sections of the Wall. They know how important it is!" Trump said.

SEE WALL ON PAGE 2



ORLIN WAGNER/AP

President Donald Trump said Democrats don't want a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border for "strictly political reasons."



WILLIAM HOWARD/Stars and Stripes

A British Royal Marine readies a FLIR Black Hornet drone for demonstration during Exercise Autonomous Warrior on the Salisbury Plain Training Area, England, on Monday. The nearly silent, pocket-sized drone transmits live video and high-definition images back to the operator and can fly about a mile in up to 25 minutes of flight time.

BY WILLIAM HOWARD
Stars and Stripes

Children who grew up playing with remotely controlled toy tanks are now adults using real world versions in war games here on the Salisbury Plain Training Area near Stonehenge.

For the past month, U.S. and British forces have been testing emerging robotic technologies in a try-before-you-buy exercise dubbed Autonomous Warrior. The fourth annual Army Warfighting Experiment is a collaborative effort focused on using unmanned aerial and ground vehicles to make troops safer and more effective on the battlefield.

"If you work off the principle that robotics should be first into harm's way, then that will start to open up opportunities where you don't have to commit manpower," said Maj. Gareth Morris, a British Army exchange officer serving as executive officer at the U.S. Army Maneuver Battle Lab. "It's all about increasing combat power without necessarily increasing the size of an army."

This year saw land-based driverless technology for the first time on a robotic tracked vehicle named Titan Strike, made by the British firm Qinetiq, and an unmanned variant of the British Warrior infantry fighting vehicle.

The driverless vehicles were among the 50 products selected for use in this year's exercise from an initial 122 submissions from commercial industry. Of those, 36 made the final cut for future consideration after soldiers from the Fort Benning, Ga.-based U.S. Army Experimental Force Platoon, or EXFOR, as well as British light infantry and Royal Marines, put them through four weeks of combat trials in rain, mud and snow.

SEE TECHNOLOGY ON PAGE 5

MILITARY

Wall: Trump seeking \$5B for border wall

FROM FRONT PAGE

Schumer and Pelosi said Monday that Republicans have the power to keep the government open since they control Congress and the White House.

"Our country cannot afford a Trump Shutdown," they said in a statement, adding that Trump "knows full well that his wall proposal does not have the votes to pass the House and Senate and should not be an obstacle to a bipartisan agreement."

Republican congressional leaders have repeatedly said it's up to Trump to cut a deal with Democrats, an acknowledgment of their inability to produce spending bills with Republican votes alone.

That gave Democrats momentum heading into the closed-door talks, which also could veer into Trump's request for emergency funding for deadly wildfires in California and a Republican-sponsored bill to extend expiring tax breaks and delay some health

care taxes.

Before lawmakers adjourn for the year they also could consider a bipartisan criminal justice reform bill, a bill to protect special counsel Robert Mueller and a plan to overhaul the system for handling sexual harassment complaints on Capitol Hill.

By far, the biggest unresolved issue is the border wall. Trump wants the next funding package to include at least \$5 billion for it, an idea Democrats have flatly rejected.

Pelosi and Schumer have urged Trump to support a bill that includes a half-dozen government funding bills largely agreed upon by lawmakers, along with a separate measure that funds the Department of Homeland Security at current levels through Sept. 30. The homeland bill includes about \$1.3 billion for fencing and other security measures at the border.

If Trump rejects that, Democrats will likely urge a continuing resolution that funds all the

remaining appropriations bills at current levels through Sept. 30, an aide said. The aide was not authorized to discuss strategy by name and requested anonymity.

Pelosi said she and many other Democrats consider the wall "immoral, ineffective and expensive" and noted that Trump promised during the 2016 campaign that Mexico would pay for the wall, an idea Mexico has repeatedly rejected.

Schumer said Democrats want to work with Trump to avert a shutdown, but said money for border security should not include the concrete wall Trump has envisioned. Instead, the money should be used for fencing and technology that experts say is appropriate, Schumer said.

Vermont Sen. Patrick Leahy, the top Democrat on the Senate Appropriations Committee, said Trump is the only obstacle between fully funding the government and a shutdown.

"Time and again, President



REBECCA BLACKWELL/AP

U.S. Border Patrol agents make arrests Monday during a pro-migration protest in San Diego.

Trump has used the government of the American people as a bargaining chip for his fabricated solution to his manufactured crisis," Leahy said Monday in a Senate speech.

Trump "wants to score a made-for-reality-TV moment and he doesn't care how many hardworking Americans will suffer for it," Leahy said. "This is not about border security. This is about politics,

pure and simple."

House Majority Whip Steve Scalise, R-La., said Democrats were the ones playing politics.

If there's a better way to secure the border than the \$5 billion plan Trump has laid out, Democrats "need to come with an alternative," Scalise said Monday on Fox News Channel.

Some US border troops returning to their home bases

BY ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

AUSTIN, Texas — Some active-duty troops assigned to the U.S.-Mexico border have completed their missions, and the Defense Department announced Monday that some units have started sending servicemembers back to their home bases.

Military engineers have replaced all concertina wire along the border as part of the "border-hardening" mission, officials at U.S. Army North confirmed. That allows certain engineering, logis-

tics and headquarters elements to return to their home bases to prepare for other missions. A timeline for redeployment was not provided Monday.

Remaining units, as well as troops on alert, will continue to assist U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents requirements along the southern border.

Peaking at about 5,800, the number of active-duty service-members at the border is now about 5,200, with 2,200 in Texas, 1,350 in Arizona and 1,650 in California, according to the Pentagon.

The number will decrease to at least 3,000 by the holidays, according to The Associated Press.

Units identified by U.S. Northern Command as having the capabilities required to continue the mission will remain at the border through Jan. 31. Those could be units already on the border or similar units that could replace them, according to a statement from Army North.

"This allows the services to continue supporting global requirements that were already in place prior the request for assistance from [the Department of

Homeland Security]," the statement reads.

The mission was originally announced to end Dec. 15.

President Donald Trump ordered the deployment of troops in late October in response to a caravan of Central American migrants moving toward the U.S. border. The number of migrants has been declining. In addition to building barriers, troops have provided additional security for Border Patrol agents.

Officials who spoke to the AP anonymously because they weren't authorized to speak pub-

licly said there is less need for combat engineers and helicopter transport crews.

But many of the military police will remain.

The Defense Department also has about 2,250 National Guard soldiers along the border for a separate mission with Border Patrol. The two deployments combined are projected to cost \$210 million. But that estimate came before the active-duty mission was extended beyond Dec. 15.

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PACIFIC

5 Marines are declared dead; search ends

BY JAMES BOLINGER
AND HANA KUSUMOTO
Stars and Stripes

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION IWAKUNI, Japan — The Marine Corps has ended an extensive search for five Marines missing after their KC-130J Hercules collided midair with an F/A-18 Hornet last week off Japan's southern coast.

"After an update from the Joint Personnel Recovery Center, and a review of all available information, I have made the determination to end the search and rescue operations for the crew of our [Hercules] ... and to declare that these Marine warriors are deceased," III Expeditionary Force commander Lt. Gen. Eric Smith said in a statement posted Tuesday afternoon to the organization's official Facebook page.

"Every possible effort was made to recover our crew and I hope the families of these selfless Americans will find comfort in the incredible efforts made by U.S., Japanese, and Australian forces during the search," he added.

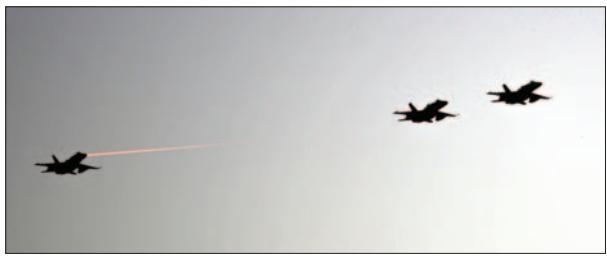
Seven Marines were involved in the training accident, which occurred just before 2 a.m. Thursday about 200 miles south of Muroto Cape on Shikoku Island, U.S. and Japanese officials said.

Although the crews were conducting regularly scheduled training, Marine investigators had not confirmed that aerial refueling was underway during the incident, the statement said.

The Hercules' flight data and cockpit voice recorders have not been found, making it "premature to speculate about wreckage recovery," the statement added.

Two Marines aboard the Hornet were recovered the day of the accident. The first has been released from a hospital, while the second — Capt. Jahmar Reslardi, 28 — was pronounced dead after being found by a Japan Maritime Self-Defense Forces ship.

The statement did not identify the five Marines, but it said their next-of-kin had been notified.



Courtesy of the U.S. Marine Corps

Marine aircraft fly in a missing-man formation over Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, S.C., last year. A similar formation is planned to honor the Marines lost in a crash off Japan last week.

Fallen Marines to be honored with missing-man formation

BY JOSEPH DITZLER
Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — F/A-18 Hornets will conduct a single-pass, missing-man formation Wednesday morning over Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni as part of a private memorial service for Marines lost in a midair collision last week.

The tradition, which the Marine Corps said in a statement was adopted from the British in

1938, involves a flight of several aircraft with one pitching skyward as the formation passes overhead, leaving a space in the formation to represent the fallen aviators.

"We mournfully ask for the community's support and understanding at this difficult time," said a statement issued Tuesday afternoon by the air station.

The Marine Corps on Tuesday ended a search for five

Marines missing after their KC-130J Hercules collided midair with an F/A-18 Hornet early Thursday off Japan's southern coast.

The Hercules crew is presumed dead, according to a post by III Marine Expeditionary Force commander Lt. Gen. Eric Smith on the III MEF Facebook page.

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Their identities were expected to be released later Tuesday by the Defense Department.

However, family members of four of the fallen Marines identified their loved ones to Stars and Stripes.

They are: Maj. Kevin Herrmann, 38, of Fredericksburg, Va.; Staff Sgt. Maximo Flores, 27, of Litchfield Park, Ariz.; Cpl. Carter Ross, 21, from Hendersonville, Tenn., and Cpl. Daniel

Baker, 21, of Tremont, Ill.

"All of us in the Sumo family are extremely saddened following the announcement of the conclusion of search and rescue operations," Lt. Col. Mitchell Maury, commander of Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 152, said in the statement. "We know this difficult decision was made after all resources were exhausted in the vigorous search for our Marines. Our thoughts are heavy,

and our prayers are with all family and friends of all five aircrew."

Smith also expressed his condolences to the lost Marines' families.

"Every member of the III MEF family mourns this loss and stands alongside the families of the fallen in this terrible moment," he said in the statement. "We remain, Semper Fidelis."

Both the Japan Self-Defense Forces and Japan Coast Guard

announced Tuesday that they'd halted their search efforts at 6 a.m.

While the coast guard has stopped searching specifically for the crewmembers, it will keep an eye out during regular patrols of the area, a spokesman for 5th Regional Coast Guard Headquarters told Stars and Stripes on Tuesday via telephone.

The coast guard sent six of its patrol boats on Thursday and continued to send vessels until Monday, although its search team had shrunk during that time, the spokesman said.

A multinational effort to find survivors included U.S., Japanese and Australian aircraft and U.S. and Japanese ships. The search spanned more than 35,000 square nautical miles and involved some 900 hours, III MEF said Tuesday.

The U.S. Navy provided more than 180 flight hours searching primarily with P-8A surveillance aircraft. The U.S. Air Force provided more than 200 search hours via C-130J and KC-135 aerial refueling aircraft as well as with MC-130J special operations aircraft, CV-22 Ospreys tilt-rotor aircraft, RC-135 reconnaissance aircraft and an RQ-4 Global Hawk drone, officials said.

III MEF has declared the incident a "Class A" mishap, Japan's Kyodo news agency reported Monday. Those involve total property damage of "\$2 million or more and/or aircraft destroyed" and "fatality or permanent disability."

Marine officials said Tuesday they are still investigating the incident.

MCAS Iwakuni is home to Marine Air Craft Group 12 and the Navy's Carrier Air Wing 5. It is one of the Pacific's largest air stations.

Stars and Stripes reporters Caitlin M. Polidoro, Michael D. Hickey, Dianna Cahn contributed to this report.
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US, S. Korea hold separate talks on cost-sharing, status of forces

BY KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — The United States and South Korea held separate talks Tuesday on military cost-sharing and the agreement on the legal status of American forces who are being consolidated south of Seoul.

The stakes were highest in Seoul where U.S. and South Korean delegates facing an end-of-year deadline began a 10th round of negotiations over footng the multimillion dollar bill to maintain some 28,500 American troops on the divided peninsula.

The current five-year deal, known as the special measures agreement, is set to expire on Dec. 31.

Negotiators reportedly have been struggling to find middle ground on a U.S. demand that Seoul increase its contribution, which has been some \$830 million per year, or about half of the total.

Most of the money pays for South Korean employees, services and construction needed to keep operations running smoothly.

No details were released Tuesday on the sensitive talks, which the Foreign Ministry said would last three days.

Separately, U.S. and South Korean officials held routine discussions in Pyeongtaek on the bilateral status of forces agreement, which lays out the legal status of American forces in South Korea.

Lt. Gen. Kenneth Wilsbach, deputy commander of U.S. Forces Korea, met with the director general of South Korea's North American affairs bureau, Kim Tae-jin, at the city hall in Pyeongtaek, the city that hosts new USFK headquarters Camp Humphreys.

The command moved to the newly expanded Army garrison over the summer, resolving the frequently delayed relocation of most U.S. forces off their previous headquarters on Yongsan Garrison in Seoul.

The Americans are now preparing to return Yongsan in the next few years to the South Korean government, which is expected to use the land as a park.

"The two sides highlighted recent developments made in the

course of USFK's relocation to Pyeongtaek, as well as preparation for the return of Yongsan Garrison," according to a joint statement about the 199th joint committee meeting.

"The two Representatives pledged to further cooperate on setting conditions for a successful transition, so as to maintain a stable stationing environment for USFK and enhance public safety and welfare," it said.

Coining the term USFK's "Pyeongtaek era," the sides pledged to work together to ensure a smooth return of Yongsan and to address potential environmental problems that may arise there and on other U.S. bases.

They also promised to maintain "timely and close commun-

cation and cooperation" to ensure "harmonious relations" between the military and local communities near Humphreys, including the need to prevent crime and address noise complaints and other inconveniences.

Humphreys, about 40 miles south of Seoul, has grown from a remote outpost surrounded by rice paddies to a sprawling base that resembles an American suburb with a population of nearly 30,000.

South Korea and the United States have been allies since the 1950-53 Korean War, which ended in an armistice instead of a peace treaty.

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MILITARY

US, Japanese soldiers train together during annual drills

By CHRISTIAN LOPEZ

Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — I Corps and Japan Ground Self-Defense Force soldiers gathered over the weekend in Hokkaido to kick off a joint command post exercise called Yama Sakura.

The annual weeklong training tests the allies' capability to defend Japanese territory as a unified fighting force. In addition to assuring combat readiness, the drills are a chance to reinforce relations with the Japanese military, I Corps commander Lt. Gen. Gary Volesky said during Sunday's opening ceremony at the JGSDF's Camp Higashi-Chitose.

"The soldiers of America's First Corps are committed to our partnership, and this exercise is an opportunity to learn, grow, and build capacity in both of our organizations," he said, according to an Army statement. "A critical objective for this exercise is strengthening the Japanese military alliance and building combined readiness across our formations."

Lt. Gen. Masato Taura, commander of JGSDF's

Northern Army, also spoke at the ceremony about the opportunity to strengthen and understand each country's warfighting force.

Following the generals' remarks, servicemen from both countries joined in a booming war cry to signify the exercise start: "Forward! Together!"

Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.-based I Corps shifted its mission to the Pacific in 2012 as part of the Obama administration's "Pacific pivot," which is intended to refocus the nation's priorities away from Afghanistan and Iraq to the Asian region.

In the past, I Corps soldiers have participated in war games on the Korean Peninsula and have traveled to India for the Yudh Abhyas exercise.

They have also played a role in increasing the Army's presence in the region through Pacific Pathways, an initiative under which units of deployed U.S. soldiers remain in theater for two or three sequential exercises.

Yama Sakura, which means "mountain cherry blossoms" in Japanese, is scheduled to wrap up Sunday.

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MILITARY

Technology: Experiment to be held in Ga. this January

FROM FRONT PAGE

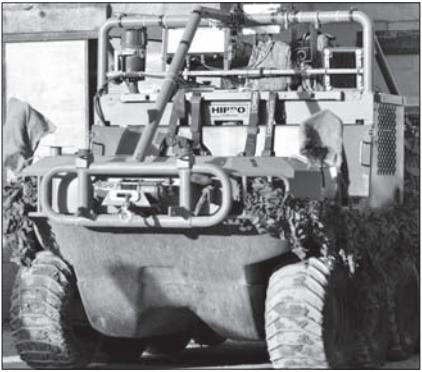
"We'll show up in the right place and right uniform, get some pieces of kit, and then we'll tell them the pros and cons and try to get good data for Maneuver Battle Lab to then decide on what to buy for the Army," said 1st Lt. William Wren, EXFOR platoon leader. "It's our responsibility to make it as realistic as possible, so we try to put a lot of tactical pressure on ourselves."

Human operators were required to fire any weapon systems, but the Titan Strike is programmed to work autonomously.

"In the 21st century, the army that knows how to use these first effectively will win," Morris said.

Testing also included a slew of unmanned and remotely controlled construction, sustainment and military vehicles, such as the Horiba Mira Bobcat and Rakka 3000 tractors that can clear away roadblocks while their operators are tucked away safely in a nearby bunker.

An unmanned Polaris MRZR X, a light, four-wheeled, off-road vehicle, can quietly zip across muddy terrain while running solely on battery power to deliver ammunition to soldiers in cover. The Hippo amphibious vehicle can carry supplies, provide cover



WILLIAM HOWARD/Stars and Stripes

An unmanned Hippo amphibious vehicle is used to carry supplies, provide cover and support casualty evacuations during the prolonged Exercise Autonomous Warrior at the Salisbury Plain Training Area, England, on Monday.

and transport casualties.

"We were using it to take it across a field for casualty evasions so that I wasn't out there in the field of fire," said Pfc. Austin Meggison, an Army infantryman with EXFOR, speaking about the Hippo. "It's really easy to use."

Some products return each year with improvements based on previous soldier feedback, like the FLIR Black Hornet PRS. The nearly silent, pocket-sized drone transmits live video and high-definition images back to the operator. It can fly about a mile in up to 25 minutes.

Observers from 14 NATO coun-

tries gathered their own impressions on possible acquisitions.

"We're helping them scout their own needs," Morris said. "For some of those nations who don't have the capacity, size of technology or advantages that we have in the U.K. and U.S., that's quite important."

The next Army Warfighting Experiment is scheduled for January at Fort Benning, Ga., where British infantry from this exercise will test other prototype technologies with their U.S. partners.

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Afghan air force conducts first nighttime airstrikes

BY PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — The Afghan air force has conducted nighttime airstrikes for the first time in a step toward making the country less dependent on American air power, officials said Tuesday.

U.S.-supplied A-29 Super Tucano light attack aircraft were used in strikes on Sunday in central Uruzgan province that inflicted heavy casualties on Taliban insurgents in addition to destroying their munitions stores, air force spokesman Jalaludin Ibrahimkhai said.

"This is a very important step that we have taken, and we will try to increase nighttime air operations carried out solely by Afghans in the future," Ibrahimkhai said.

The U.S.-led coalition in Afghanistan has been training Afghans for nighttime operations on different aircraft for months. Night flights are considered safer than daytime sorties because they are more difficult for insurgents to target.

Afghan forces are also expected to start using their MD-530F Cayuse Warrior light attack helicopters for nighttime strikes in the near future, Defense Ministry spokesman Ghafour Ahmed

Jawed told Stars and Stripes. "We want to continue this. It is really important because now we have a problem supporting our ground forces, and if we improve our capabilities, casualties will decrease," Jawed said.

Last week, the incoming commander of U.S. Central Command, Lt. Gen. Kenneth McKenzie, told the Senate Armed Services Committee that the high casualties suffered by government forces were not sustainable.

That assessment came after Defense Minister Gen. Tariq Shah told parliament in September that the previous month was the deadliest ever for local forces, with more than 500

soldiers killed. Shah said a major factor was that ground forces were not being backed up by air support at night.

Despite billions of dollars spent by Washington to strengthen Afghanistan's air force, the country's military still relies heavily on U.S. air power. This year, U.S. forces dropped more munitions in Afghanistan than in any other year in over a decade.

Efforts to boost the Afghans' air capabilities have been going on for more than a decade. But coalition officials say it will likely take years before the service is self-sufficient.

Still, they say developments like Sunday's prove that efforts to wean the Afghans off dependence on U.S. air power are moving in the right direction.

Harry S. Truman departs Europe after deployment

BY SCOTT WYLAND
Stars and Stripes

NAPLES, Italy — The USS Harry S. Truman left European waters Tuesday after a three-month operation that included conducting the first aircraft carrier patrol in the Arctic since the Cold War.

The Truman took part in exercises and security missions in the North Atlantic, as well as in the Mediterranean and Adriatic, while using the "dynamic force employment" concept, which involves deploying warships in less predictable patterns.

The Nimitz-class carrier's foray into the icy Arctic regions followed the National Defense Strategy's edict to focus less on combating violent extremism and more on countering a more assertive Russia and China.

"The operations the strike group conducted across the region alongside our allies and partners — and notwithstanding a variety of austere environmental conditions in the high north — showcase our inherent flexibility," Adm. James

Foggo, head of Naval Forces Europe and Africa, said in a statement. "[They] prove that there are no international waters off limits to our forces."

In April, the Truman deployed to the eastern Mediterranean and launched airstrikes against Islamic State the week after the U.S. led a missile strike against suspected chemical sites in Syria.

The Truman returned to Norfolk, Va., in mid-July and then resumed operations in Europe in September.

The schedule was a change from previous years when carriers would deploy to the Mediterranean and Persian Gulf for six or seven months before returning home.

The Truman took part in several exercises, including Baltic Operations and, most recently, Trident Juncture, the largest NATO war game since the Cold War. An estimated 65 warships, 250 aircraft and 50,000 alliance personnel participated.

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MILITARY

US returns 3 bells to Philippines after a century

BY J.P. LAWRENCE
Stars and Stripes

A C-130 transport plane landed in Manila on Tuesday morning carrying three bells taken from the Philippines a century ago during its war with America, ending a long-standing dispute between the two allies.

U.S. Ambassador Sung Kim turned over the "Balangiga Bells" to the Philippine government, which had called for their return for decades over the objections of some U.S. veterans.

"The history of these bells spans the entire relationship between the United States and the Philippines," Kim said at a ceremony at Manila's Villamor Air Base. "Their return underscores the enduring friendship, partnership and alliance between our countries."

The Air Force conducted a special airift mission to bring one of the bells from Korea to Japan, where it met its two sister bells before flying to Manila.

The Philippine government will now take the three bells to their original parish in the village of Balangiga, in the center of the Philippine archipelago, for a ceremony on Saturday. They will be hung in a Catholic church rebuilt by villagers and U.S. sailors after a super typhoon in 2013.

Local religious leaders said they were grateful the bells were being returned in



BULLIT MARQUEZ/AP

Philippine air force personnel unload three church bells seized by American troops as war trophies more than a century ago as they arrive Tuesday in suburban Pasay city, southeast of Manila.

time to ring for Christmas services.

"During a time of war, the bells were taken," Bishop Crispin Varquez said in a statement. "They are being brought back during the season of hope and peace."

The bells' contentious history dates back

to the Philippine-American War, which lasted from February 1898 to July 1902 and left more than 4,000 U.S. troops and about 200,000 Filipinos dead, according to U.S. estimates.

U.S. soldiers took the three bells in 1901 after a deadly battle in Balangiga, where they had reportedly rang to signal an ambush that killed 48 U.S. troops. After the attack, U.S. cannons shelled the town. Army Gen. Jacob Smith infamously ordered his troops to kill any male in the region over the age of 10 and turn the area into a "howling wilderness."

Until recently, two bells had been housed at F.E. Warren Air Force Base, Wyo. The Army's 9th Infantry Regiment possessed the third bell and displayed it in the 2nd Infantry Division museum at Camp Red Cloud in South Korea.

Over the years, the missing trio assumed emotional significance in the Philippines, where some saw their taking as a colonial-era slight. Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte and his predecessors have repeatedly called for their return since 1994, but some veterans and Wyoming's members of Congress opposed the move.

The bells came to represent the sacrifice American troops had made, even if the war was messy and in some parts dishonorable, said Eric Burke, a historian who had served

as the 9th Infantry Regiment's guidon-bearer, shortly after Defense Secretary Jim Mattis had called for their return.

Crucial to gaining Mattis' approval were the efforts of Veterans of Foreign Wars posts in the Philippines and a national resolution by the VFW in July, said Sonny Busa, a Filipino-American Army veteran. The American Legion, which once opposed returning the bells, made a similar resolution, showing further veteran support for the move.

Some U.S. veterans continue to have mixed feelings about the return. Jim Collins, a 9th Regiment veteran, said he hopes the bells will not become a "tourist attraction for anti-American types" or "perceived as an apology for past colonialism."

Local religious officials said the bells would no longer be political footballs and would be used to once again ring in services, which was their original purpose.

The return "affords us an opportunity to understand and appreciate history better with a more mature perspective," Archbishop Romulo Valles, president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, said in a statement. "It also demonstrates that the path to healing and reconciliation may be arduous but is never impossible."

Stars and Stripes reporter Seth Robson contributed to this report.
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US, Ukrainians fight through mud, rain in Germany war games

BY MARTIN EGNAH
Stars and Stripes

HOHENFELS, Germany — Troops and tanks from Texas and choppers from Colorado fought a mock battle in a freezing, muddy German forest Tuesday alongside units from 15 nations and partner nations, including Ukraine.

More than 5,500 soldiers took part in the two-week-long mock combat portion of Combined Resolve XI, the Army's culminating event for tank and aviation units on nine-month rotations in Europe.

The soldiers from the 4th Infantry Division's 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, based in Fort Carson, Colo., and 1st Cavalry Division's 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team out of Fort Hood, Texas, will be wrapping up their rotations to Europe next year.

Alongside the Americans in the wet and cold were armored units from Ukraine. The exercise comes amid heightened tensions along the Ukrainian-Russian border after Russia fired on and seized several Ukrainian ships last month in the Sea of Azov.

The U.S. began its nine-month armor deployments to Europe in response to Russia's 2014 annexation of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula. The rotational armored and aviation brigades are part of Operation Atlantic Resolve, the United States' commitment to deter possible Russian aggression in Eastern Europe.

"The rotational deployments of

armored brigade combat teams are a tangible expression of U.S. commitment to strengthening the defensive and deterrent capabilities of the NATO alliance," the Army said in a statement on the exercise.

The rotational units faced a national enemy made up of U.S. and Albanian troops as near-constant rains turned swaths of land into fields of sticky sludge for them to maneuver through. A brief look down confirmed that not a single soldier made it without plunging his boots into the mire.

The vehicles didn't fare much better.

Tanks generally moved through the mud more easily, but many Humvees and smaller vehicles got stuck, making easy targets for the opposition forces launching surprise attacks.

The soldiers used drones and helicopters to scout enemy positions and minimize the effects of any ambush, while attack helicopters and tanks took out exposed enemy targets.

The rotational units are meant to provide a strong foundation for U.S. security efforts in the region.

"The forward presence of U.S. soldiers is the bedrock of our country's ability to assure allies, deter adversaries and react in a timely manner if deterrence fails," the Army statement said.

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PHOTOS BY MARTIN EGNAH/Stars and Stripes

A Humvee is stuck in the mud at exercise Combined Resolve XI in Hohenfels, Germany, on Monday.



Left: A convoy of Ukrainian armored vehicles rumbles by during the drills. **Right:** Sgt. Luke Caney, a gunner with the 615th Military Police Company, talks on the radio from atop his Humvee.

VETERANS

Blue Water Navy bill fails in Senate

BY NIKKI WENTLING
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A final deal to provide Department of Veterans Affairs benefits to thousands of veterans who served off the coast during the Vietnam War failed in the Senate on Monday night with little time remaining in the 115th Congress to try again.

The Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act would extend eligibility for disability compensation and health care to "Blue Water" Navy veterans — servicemen who were aboard aircraft carriers, cruisers, destroyers and other ships, some of whom have fought for years to prove they were exposed to Agent Orange. The dioxin-laden herbicide has been found to cause respiratory cancers, Parkinson's disease and heart disease, as well as other conditions.

The House voted 382-0 in favor of the legislation in June. Since then, it's been stuck in the Senate. VA Secretary Robert Wilkie voiced his opposition to the bill in September, citing cost concerns and insufficient scientific evidence. He urged lawmakers to hold off until a new study is released in 2019.

On Monday night, Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., went to the Senate floor and asked for unanimous consent to pass the bill. Unanimous consent expedites approval but can be stopped if one senator objects.

Citing cost concerns, Sen. Mike Enzi, R-Wyo., chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, objected.

"On this bill, many of us have been made aware of the potential cost growth and the budgetary and operational pressures that would happen at the VA," he said. "They're having a lot of problems, anyway."

Enzi said he wanted more details about how many veterans would be made eligible for benefits under the legislation and how much it would cost.

According to initial estimates from the Congressional Budget Office, the bill would come at a price of \$1.1 billion for the next 10 years. VA officials have argued the true total could be billions of dollars more. To offset costs, the bill includes a new fee for VA home loans — a proposal some lawmakers oppose.

"There's clearly more work to do just on figuring out the spending and administration of this and the deficit impacts this bill will have," Enzi said on the Senate floor.

Rep. Tim Walz, D-Minn., later criticized Enzi's objection, arguing the same senator voted in favor of the GOP tax cuts estimated to increase the national deficit.

"I must say that it is a bit disheartening to see a bill that was passed unanimously by the House blocked by just a handful

of senators over supposed fiscal concerns when those same senators voted to add trillions of dollars to the deficit last year to score a political win on the back of American taxpayers," Walz said in a statement.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars also issued a scathing criticism of Enzi on Monday night, describing his objection as "obstructive," and adding that neither "the VFW nor its members will forget this."

Enzi's opposition came after Sen. Johnny Isakson, R-Ga., pressured senators to approve the bill. Isakson, chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, has worked for months to address concerns from some of his fellow Republicans.

Enzi wasn't the only senator with concerns. Sen. Mike Lee, R-Utah, opposed the effort because he wanted to wait for the scientific study the VA promised in 2019, according to a Military Update report.

Isakson rebuked requests Monday to wait for the study and said: "This thing has been studied as long as it needs to be studied. We've got the best information we need to get."

"I would just ask every member before they consider casting a 'no' vote, think about what you're doing," Isakson said. "I would ask each of you to search your heart ... think about the veterans in your state and cast a vote for doing the right thing for the right people at the right time and not object to the motion."

Gillibrand and Sen. Jon Tester, D-Mont., the ranking Democrat on the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, held a news conference Tuesday with veterans groups and requested the Senate try again to pass the bill.

Senate leadership could still bring the issue up under regular order in its remaining days, though it appeared unlikely Tuesday. Tester said senators could also try again for unanimous consent, like they attempted Monday.

If the Senate fails to approve the bill before the end of the 115th Congress, advocates will have to start from the beginning next year.

"The truth is, we can't wait another six months or nine months or a year for Secretary Wilkie," Gillibrand said. "We don't have that time. Our veterans are dying now. I think any delay by the secretary of the VA is morally wrong."

John Wells, an attorney and director of the group Military-Veterans Advocacy, has been fighting on behalf of Blue Water Navy veterans since 2008. He was doubtful Tuesday about the Senate's ability to approve the bill.

"I'd be very shocked," Wells said. "It would be very nice if it did pass, but I'd say the odds are tremendously against it at this point."

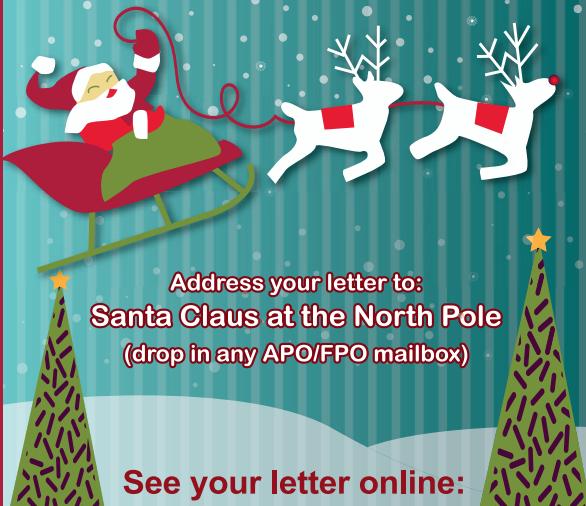
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NATION

White House scrambling to find a new chief of staff

BY ZEKE MILLER, JILL COVLIN
AND JONATHAN LEMIRE
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump is scrambling to find a new chief of staff after his first choice to replace John Kelly bailed at the last minute and several other potential successors signaled they weren't interested in the job.

Back to square one, Trump is mulling over a list of at least four potential candidates after Nick Ayers, Vice President Mike Pence's chief of staff, took himself off the running Sunday and decided that he would instead be leaving the White House.

The announcement surprised even senior staffers who believed that Ayers' ascension was a done deal.

Trump is now soliciting input on a list of candidates that is said to include Office of Management and Budget Director Mick Mulvaney; Rep. Mark Meadows, R-N.C., the chairman of the conservative House Freedom Caucus; and former New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie. Allies are pitching Trump on even more contenders.

But as quickly as names were being floated, candidates appeared to be pulling themselves from consideration, underscoring the challenges of working for a mercurial president who has acknowledged that he likes to surround himself with chaos and de-

spises any suggestion he's being managed.

"In the best of times, it is relentless," said Chris Whipple, an expert on chiefs of staff and author of "The Gatekeepers," a book on the subject. "It's 24/7. It's thankless. You get all of the blame and none of the credit for everything that happens. And that's in the best of times. We are not in the best of times."

Chris Whipple
expert on chiefs
of staff

Trump's administration has set records for staff turnover, and the president has often struggled to attract experienced political professionals, a challenge that has grown more difficult with the upcoming threat of costly Democratic oversight investigations and an uncertain political environment.

U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer, a potential contender, said he was "entirely focused" on his current position. A person familiar with Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin's thinking but not authorized to speak publicly

made clear he, too, is happy in his current post.

Ayers' ascension and Kelly's departure looked like a done deal Friday night, according to multiple people in and close to the administration, with an announcement planned for Monday. Trump and Ayers had discussed the job for months, and the president had already been steering inquiries to the Pence staffer rather than Kelly.

These people, like others, spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive personnel matters.

But Trump jumped the gun Saturday, and Ayers re-evaluated his decision.

While a White House official said Ayers' decision was driven by a desire to return to Georgia to be closer to his family, people familiar with his thinking said he was also worried about scrutiny of his former political consulting business.

He and Trump also could not reach agreement on Ayers' length of service. Ayers wanted to serve on an interim basis; Trump wanted a two-year commitment.

Trump was stung by Ayers' decision to back out, according to people close to him.

The embarrassment comes at a pivotal time for Trump as he prepares for re-election while facing an expected onslaught of investigations from Democrats who will take control of the House and



ZURAB KURTSIKIDZE/AP

Vice President Mike Pence, left, and his chief of staff, Nick Ayers, attend a meeting in 2017. Ayers has taken himself out of the running to become President Donald Trump's chief of staff.

amid the ongoing Russia probe.

When Trump appoints a replacement for Kelly, he will set a record for most chiefs of staff within the first 24 months of an administration, according to an analysis by Kathryn Dunn Tenpas of the Brookings Institution.

Trump has told confidants that he is eager to bring on someone he gets along with as his third chief of staff.

While he still had a measure of respect for Kelly, the men's personal relationship had long been frosty.

This time, Trump has told allies, he wants someone he can chat with — trading gossip and complaining about media cover-

age — as well as someone more attuned politically.

Meanwhile, the list of names floated for the job continued to grow, including mentions by people close to the administration of former Trump deputy campaign manager David Bossie, acting Attorney General Matthew Whitaker — even White House communications director Bill Shine and press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders.

Many of them weren't being taken seriously, but the breadth of the list highlighted the uncertainty in Trump's political orbit over the search for a replacement for the position.

Some in GOP starting to worry about Trump investigations

BY JONATHAN LEMIRE,
ALAN FRAM AND ELANA SCHOR
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's intensifying legal troubles are unnerving some of his fellow Republicans. Despite his brash stance, they believe the turmoil has left him increasingly vulnerable as he gears up for what is sure to be a nasty fight for re-election.

Trump, ever confident of his ability to bend story lines to his will, mocks the investigations into his conduct as candidate and president as a "witch hunt" and insists he will survive the

threats.

But a shift began to unfold over the weekend after prosecutors in New York for the first time linked Trump to a federal crime of illegal hush payments. That left some of his associates fearful that his customary bravado is unwarranted. For some Republicans, the implication that the president may have directed a campaign finance violation, which would be a felony, could foreshadow a true turning point in the Republican relationship with him when special counsel Robert Mueller releases his report on the Russia investigation.

"I'm sure there's going to be a

lot more that's going to come out from the Southern District of New York and, at some point, from the Mueller investigation as well," Sen. John Thune, of South Dakota, the chamber's incoming No. 2 Republican, said Monday. "What they're implying there, obviously, is something I assume at some point the president will have an opportunity to respond to."

As the legal drama plays out, political challenges that could threaten Trump's re-election are piling up.

Republicans are still coming to terms with their drubbing in last month's House elections and looking for someone to blame.

The departure of John Kelly as White House chief of staff has set off a disorganized search for a replacement who could stay in the job through the 2020 campaign.

Also, Democrats will soon take control of the House of Representatives, wielding subpoena power and potentially exploring impeachment proceedings. Meanwhile, financial markets have been jittery, in part because of Trump's trade wars and concerns that higher borrowing costs could ultimately trigger a recession.

One leading House Republican said the situation surrounding Trump remains volatile and has urged colleagues to wait for

the Mueller report, which some believe could emerge early next year. That Republican, who demanded anonymity to assess the situation candidly, has urged fellow GOP lawmakers to not defend the indefensible but to also not believe every charge.

The lawmaker expressed hope that the special counsel's findings come out sooner rather than later so there will be more time before the 2020 elections.

For all the private and not-so-private party worries, many close to Trump predict he not only will survive the Russia investigation but will be re-elected in two years.

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NATION

Jury: Life plus 419 years for Va. crowd attack

By DENISE LAVOIE
Associated Press

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. — A jury recommended life plus 419 years Tuesday for a man convicted of killing a woman and injuring dozens when he drove his car into counterprotesters at a white nationalist rally in Virginia.

James Alex Fields Jr. stood stoically with his hands folded in front of him as a court clerk read the verdict, which now must be taken under advisement by the judge, who will issue the final sentence. Judge Richard Moore scheduled a sentencing hearing for March 29.

The jury reached its verdict after deliberating for about four hours over two days.

Judges in Virginia often impose the sentence recommended by juries. Under state law, they can impose lower sentences than what the jury recommends, but cannot increase them.

Before issuing its recommendation, the jury asked Moore if the sentences would run consecutively or concurrently. He replied that sentences usually run consecutively, but that jurors could recommend concurrent sentences if they choose.

The jury deliberated for just under two



STEVE HELBER/AP

Susan Bro, right, mother of Heather Heyer, is escorted down the steps of the courthouse after a guilty verdict was reached in the trial of James Alex Fields Jr. on Friday.

hours Monday after hearing emotional testimony from the mother of Heather Heyer, 32, a paralegal and activist who was killed when Fields rammed his car into a crowd at a "Unite the Right" white nationalist rally in Charlottesville on Aug. 12, 2017.

Jurors also heard from several people who suffered severe injuries. A psychologist testifying for the defense said Fields

has a long history of mental health issues, including bipolar disorder.

Heyer's mother, Susan Bro, told the jury her daughter's death has been like "an explosion in our family."

"We are forever scarred by the pain," she said.

Jeanne "Star" Peterson said her life has been a "living nightmare" since she was hit by Fields' car. Her right leg was shattered, and she's had five surgeries to try to repair it. She also suffered a broken spine and still hasn't been able to return to work.

"I will be dealing with the aftermath of Fields' choices for the rest of my life," Peterson said.

Fields, 21, drove to Virginia from his home in Maumee, Ohio, to support the white nationalists. After the rally, as a large group of counterprotesters marched through Charlottesville singing and laughing, he stopped his car, backed up, then sped into the crowd, according to testimony from witnesses and video surveillance shown to jurors.

Wednesday Bowie, a counterprotester who got caught on the trunk of Fields' car when he backed up and was then slammed into a parked truck and thrown to the ground, told the jury that in addition to a broken pelvis and other physical injuries, she has been hospitalized three times for post-traumatic stress disorder over the past year.

She told the jury, "Please know that the world is not a safe place with Mr. Fields in it."

Testifying for the defense, University of Virginia School of Medicine professor and psychologist Daniel Murrie told the jury that while Fields was not legally insane at the time, he has a long history of mental health issues.

Fields had inexplicable volatile outbursts as a young child and was diagnosed with bipolar disorder at age 6, Murrie said. He was later diagnosed with schizoid personality disorder.

Murrie said Fields went off his psychiatric medication at age 18 and built an isolated "lifestyle centered around being alone."

A video of Fields shown to the jury during the first phase of the trial showed him sobbing and hyperventilating after he was hit by a woman who had died and others were seriously injured.

Fields' lawyer Denise Lunsford called him a "mentally compromised individual" and urged the jury to consider his long history of mental health issues when considering a sentence.

The Unite the Right rally had been organized in part to protest the planned removal of a statue of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee. Hundreds of Ku Klux Klan members, neo-Nazis and other white nationalists — emboldened by the election of President Donald Trump — streamed into the college town for one of the largest gatherings of white supremacists in a decade.

Patients seek photos doctor took of abuse

By DAVID KLEPPER
Associated Press

ALBANY, N.Y. — Former patients of a doctor accused of molesting children at Rockefeller University Hospital for decades are demanding to know what happened to photos they say the physician took while the abuse was occurring.

The physician, Reginald Archibald, worked at the New York City hospital from 1948 to 1982 as an endocrinologist who specialized in childhood growth. Former patients have said that in addition to molesting them, he would photograph them naked for what he said was scientific research. Archibald died in 2007.

Peter Katsikis had only one appointment with Archibald, in 1969. He said Archibald directed him to remove his clothes, he touched him sexually and then took several photos of him in the nude. Katsikis was 12 and said it was his first sexual experience. He wouldn't tell anyone until he told his wife 26 years later.

The trauma changed him, he said, making him cynical and sometimes short-tempered as an adult. The Associated Press does not typically identify people who say they are sexual assault victims unless they grant permission.

"I've replayed the episode a couple thousand times," said Katsikis, now 61, who lives in North Carolina. "It took me a couple years

to sort things out as to what truly happened. I didn't know anything about sex at 12 years old. When I got older I started to get angry, because I realized he took away my innocence."

The hospital has acknowledged that Archibald's conduct with patients was "inappropriate" and has hired a law firm to investigate. Hospital officials have not, however, said whether any of the photographs were found in hospital records. Attorneys for former patients say more than 1,000 children may have been victimized.

Questions about the whereabouts of the photos continues to haunt many of the former patients, according to Michael Pfau, an attorney with the Seattle-based firm of Pfau Cochran Vertes Amala, who is representing about 100 former patients.

The thought that the photos are now circulating as child pornography compounds his clients' pain and fear, Pfau said.

"Finding these photos is critical for our clients," he said. "Hopefully, the hospital can do the right thing and accelerate the investigation."

A spokesman for the hospital declined to comment when asked about the photos Monday.

Asked what he would do if any photos are found of his single appointment with Archibald, Katsikis paused briefly before answering.

"After the litigation is over," he said, "let's have them destroyed."

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NATION

Plea bargain outrages accuser in rape case

BY RYAN TARINELLI
Associated Press

DALLAS — A Texas judge on Monday accepted a plea bargain allowing a former student of Baylor University in Waco, Texas, accused of raping a woman at a fraternity party to avoid serving jail time, marking at least the third time the judge has approved probation for men accused of sexually assaulting Baylor students.

Judge Ralph Strother's decision to accept the plea deal sparked outrage from the woman who accused Jacob Walter Anderson of repeatedly raping her. The woman says she was plied with a drink of punch at a party in 2016 and became disoriented. Anderson, the woman said, led her behind a tent and assaulted her while she was gagged and choked.

"He stole my body, virginity and power over my body," the woman said in court, according to a family spokesman.

Anderson had been indicted on sexual assault charges; the deal

allowed him to plead no contest to a lesser charge of unlawful restraint. A no contest plea means a person does not admit guilt but will offer no defense. Anderson was expelled from Baylor after a university investigation.

The deal allows Anderson to receive deferred probation. The Phi Delta Theta president agreed to seek counseling and pay a \$400 fine. Anderson will not be forced to register as a sex offender.

The woman told authorities she was assaulted until she lost consciousness, and police reported Anderson left her alone. Police said she had vomited on herself and could have choked to death in the backyard.

She has not been named, and The Associated Press generally does not name possible victims of sexual assault.

"I not only have to live with the rape and the repercussions of the rape, I have to live with the knowledge that the McLennan County justice system is severely broken," the family statement quoted the

woman as saying. "I have to live with the fact that after all these years and everything I have suffered, no justice was achieved."

Anderson's attorneys declined to comment Monday.

McLennan County District Attorney Abel Reyna defended the plea deal in October.

"This office stands by the plea offered and believes we have achieved the best result possible with the evidence at hand," Reyna said.

He said evidence did not support the allegation that the victim may have been drugged.

Judge Strother said Monday that in making the decision, he had the benefit of arguments filed by attorneys on both sides and a background report assembled by

a probation department. He said much of the comments he saw on social media or in emails were "not fully informed, misinformed or totally uninformed."

The decision Monday was not the first time Strother has sentenced men accused of sex crimes to probation. Last year, he sentenced a man to deferred probation after he pleaded guilty in the 2013 rape of a former Baylor student. The judge ordered the man to pay for the woman's counseling. The man told police the woman had been drunk, according to an affidavit.

Strother earlier this year sentenced a man to felony probation for the sexual assault of a former Baylor student, a punishment that came with 30 days in jail. The man, who was a student at the time and told authorities the sex was consensual, was allowed to serve the jail time on the weekends.

Strother did not return a call from The Associated Press seeking comment.

The alleged assault by Anderson

happened about the same time that Baylor was engulfed in a sexual assault scandal surrounding its football team in 2016. It resulted in the firing of then-football coach Art Briles and the demolition of the university's president, Kent Starr. Athletic Director Ian McCaw was disciplined by the school and resigned.

The university has since settled several lawsuits from women who said their allegations of sexual assault by football players were mishandled or ignored.

The outrage over Anderson's plea deal also mirrors reaction to the case involving ex-Stanford University swimmer Brock Turner, who was convicted in 2016 of sexually assaulting an intoxicated woman outside a fraternity party. A judge in that case rejected a prosecutor's demand for a lengthy prison term and instead sentenced Turner to six months in jail. He was released from jail in September 2016 after serving three months.

Roads still dangerous in US South after storm

BY JONATHAN DREW
Associated Press

DURHAM, N.C. — Several southern states hit hard by a wintry storm were gradually warming Tuesday, but forecasters warned that temperatures in many areas would plunge below freezing again Tuesday night. That will reinforce the melting snow, making some roads treacherous.

Scores of schools in Virginia and North Carolina were closed for a second day. Georgia also announced a late start for state government workers because of fears about ice on roads. The storm that blew in over the weekend was blamed for at least three deaths in North Carolina, along with numerous car crashes, power outages and canceled flights.

North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper said Monday that the worst of the storm had passed, but residents — particularly motorists — should keep watch for dangerous conditions. The highway patrol already had responded to more than 670 collisions and nearly 1,600 calls for services since the storm began.

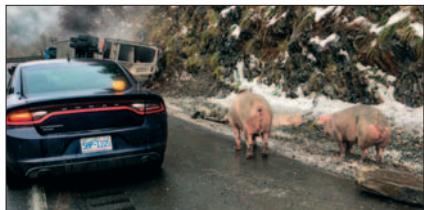
"We need to stay vigilant. We're not out of the woods yet," Cooper said Monday. "This storm dropped staggering amounts of snow, ice and rain across our state. A year's worth of snow or more fell in some places in little more than a day."

More than 20 inches fell in parts of western North Carolina.

A truck driver died Sunday after suffering what appeared to



Troy Herrington sits on a mountain of snow in a shopping center parking lot as he waits for his boss to pick him up after clearing the lot in Greensboro, N.C., on Monday.



Pigs wander the shoulder of Interstate 40 in Haywood County, N.C., after a weather-related crash on Monday.

be a heart attack from shoveling out his rig that got stuck at the height of the storm along Interstate 77 in the central part of the state, Yadkin County Emergency Services Director Keith Vestal said.

The state emergency operations center said one man died Sunday when a tree fell on him in Mecklenburg County, while an ailing woman died in Haywood County when her oxygen was cut off due to power outages.

In Charlotte, police shut down a street Monday after reports of ice falling from the Duke Energy Center. And an overturned truck full of pigs added to traffic delays in the western part of that state.

Still, the snow gave some people a chance for fun in places that don't normally see a lot of snow. In North Carolina's Durham County, where a foot fell in places Sunday, kids reveled in a day off from school as a second dusting of snow and sleet fell Monday.

Police rip toddler from mom's arms at benefits office in NY

BY DEEPTHI HAJELA
AND JIM MUSTIAN
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Outrage built Monday over a video showing police officers violently yanking a toddler from his mother's arms at a Brooklyn, N.Y., public benefits office, with officials criticizing police for not de-escalating the situation and clients of the facility complaining it is indicative of how the city treats social services recipients.

The video, taken by a bystander, captured the chaotic scene that unfolded last Friday as officers tried to remove mother Jazmine Headley from the crowded office, where she had sat on the floor for two hours because of a lack of chairs. Police were called when she refused a security guard's order to leave. The woman ended up lying face-up on the floor during a tug of war over her son, 18 months.

"The baby was screaming for his life," Nyashia Ferguson, who posted video on Facebook under the name Monae Sinclair, told The New York Times. "The lady was begging for them to get off of her. I was scared."

Other clients shouted at the officers. At one point, an officer can be seen pulling her stun gun and pointing it at people in the angry crowd.

Headley was charged with obstructing governmental administration, resisting arrest, endangering the welfare of a child and trespassing. As of Monday afternoon, she was still in jail because there was a warrant for her arrest in New Jersey, prosecutors said.

Bail was not requested, and prosecutors were reaching out to New Jersey officials to "expedite her release."

A family member was taking care of the child, authorities said.

The Brooklyn public defender's office called on prosecutors to dismiss the charges.

At a news conference outside the benefits office Monday, Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams, a Democrat and former police officer, likened the officers involved in Headley's arrest to "Border Patrol police snatching away" a baby. He called Nyashia Ferguson blemish on our Facebook entire city."

"The mother didn't endanger the welfare of the child. The actions of the department endangered the welfare of the child," Adams said. "If it's wrong in Mexico, then it's wrong in New York City."

City Council Speaker Corey Johnson, a Democrat, called the incident "appalling and heartbreaking" and criticized both the police and the city agency where Headley had gone for help.

"It is unacceptable that Human Resources Administration has such little capacity to handle its core functions that folks seeking their assistance must sit on the floor with their children while waiting for an appointment," he said in a statement.

Mayor Bill de Blasio on Monday tweeted: "This was a disturbing incident. Like anyone who's watched this video, I have a lot of questions about how this was handled."

Steve Ball, commissioner of the Department of Social Services, said he was "deeply troubled" by the incident and a "thorough" review had been launched.

NATION

Christmas tree farmers' ads tout real over artificial

By GILLIAN FLACCUS
Associated Press

TUALATIN, Ore. — Rosa Villarreal's three young sons jumped and ran around the field of Christmas trees like jackrabbits, their excitement palpable as they moved from evergreen to evergreen. The boys, ages 2, 4 and 6, were picking out a real tree this year — a new tradition their young parents hope will create lasting memories.

"I saw this video where the big tree, the mom decorates it, and the little tree, the kids get to decorate it," she said, as her husband, Jason Jimenez, snapped a photo of their toddler posing with a tiny tree just his size.

Christmas tree farmers across the U.S. worry families such as Villarreal's are slowly dwindling. Artificial trees, once crude imitations of an evergreen, are now so realistic that it's hard to tell they are fakes even though many are conveniently pre-strung with lights and can fold up for storage at the push of a button.

Between 75 and 80 percent of Americans who have a Christmas tree now have an artificial one, and the \$1 billion market for fake trees is growing at about 4 percent a year — even though they can be reused again and again.

To combat this trend, Christmas tree farmers have joined forces as the Christmas Tree Promotion Board are running a social media ad campaign this holiday season to tout the benefits of a real evergreen. The campaign called "It's Christmas. Keep It Real!" is funded by a 15-cent fee that tree farmers pay for each tree they harvest.

It's a modern-day attempt at

such famous agricultural ad campaigns as "Got Milk?" and "Beef. It's What's For Dinner."

A series of short movies on Instagram and Facebook follow real families as they hunt for the perfect tree, cut it down and decorate it.

The target audience is the "millennial mom" because tree farmers are increasingly worried that young adults starting their own family traditions will opt for an artificial tree, costing farmers a generation of customers, said Marsha Gray, executive director of the Christmas Tree Promotion Board, based in Michigan.

"The target we're talking about right now is millennials: first house, first baby. That's kind of the decision-making time," she said, adding that the videos show families cutting their own trees and buying pre-cut trees from lots.

"We realize they may have never done this before. And we need to help them discover it and figure out how to include it in their holiday."

It's impossible to know exactly how many real Christmas trees are sold each year because there is no central clearinghouse or agency collecting that information. But the National Christmas Tree Association estimates about 25 million evergreens are harvested each year — and presumably, most of those are sold.

Americans buy about 10 million artificial trees each year, said Thomas "Mac" Harman, CEO of Balsam Hill, the leading retailer of artificial Christmas trees. Harman is also the president of the American Christmas Tree Association, which does not disclose its



GILLIAN FLACCUS/AP

Tommy Lee, left, a sixth-generation tree farmer at Lee Farms in Tualatin, Ore., helps Jason Jimenez and his sons with the Douglas fir they selected Nov. 29. Christmas tree farmers are funding a social media ad campaign aimed at persuading young families to buy real trees instead of artificial ones.



ERIC RISBERG/AP

Stephen Pieraldi, left, gets assistance purchasing an artificial Christmas tree at the Balsam Hill Outlet store in Burlingame, Calif., on Nov. 29.

membership but raised \$70,000 in donations in 2016 for its work, which includes tooling up artificial trees.

Most people buying artificial trees cite convenience, allergens and fire safety, he said.

Many families now have both

a real tree and an artificial tree, and small mom-and-pop tree farms that allow families to cut their own evergreen remain extremely popular, Harman said.

"I think it's the farms in the middle that are really seeing their business shrink because more

people are either getting their tree from Home Depot — which is supporting the big farms — or they're going out to these small farms," he said. "I think a lot of the angst about 'artificial trees are taking over' is coming from these mid-sized farms."

To fourth-generation tree farmer Casey Grogan, that angst is as real as the towering noble and Nordmann firs he grows at Silver Bells Tree Farm in Silverton, Ore. Oregon is the nation's No. 1 producer of Christmas trees, yet Grogan said he has watched about half the fellow tree farmers around him go out of business in the past decade.

"We're an industry that would like to remain here and be around — and if everybody buys an artificial tree, we're not going to be here," said Grogan, who is also president of the Pacific Northwest Christmas Tree Association.

"It may be a little difficult, but not everything is easy," he said of buying a real tree. "It's worth the extra effort."

'Truth isn't truth' tops the list of notable quotes in 2018

Associated Press

NEW HAVEN, Conn. — The assertion that "truth isn't truth," made by a personal attorney for President Donald Trump, tops a Yale Law School librarian's list of the most notable quotes of 2018.

Rudy Giuliani's statement came in an August interview on NBC's "Meet the Press" when he told host Chuck Todd that Trump might "get trapped into perjury" if he were interviewed in special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia investigation.

When Todd replied, "Truth is truth," Giuliani responded: "No, it isn't truth. Truth isn't truth."

Giuliani later explained he was trying to make the case that having Trump

sit down for an interview with Mueller's team wouldn't accomplish much because of the conflicting nature of witnesses' recollections.

It was one of several Trump-related quotations on the list assembled by Fred Shapiro, an associate director at the library.

The yearly list is an update to "The Yale Book of Quotations," which was first published in 2006. Shapiro chooses quotes that are famous or revealing of the spirit of the times, and not necessarily eloquent or admirable.

The list

1. "Truth isn't truth." — Rudy Giuliani, interview on "Meet the Press," Aug. 19.
2. "I liked beer. I still like beer." — Brett Kavanaugh, U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee testimony on his Supreme Court nomination, Sept. 27.

3. "While all pharmaceutical treatments have side effects, racism is not a known side

effect of any Sanofi medication." — Sanofi drug company, in a tweet responding to Roseanne Barr's blaming of their product Ambien in explaining a tweet that led ABC to cancel her show, May 30.

4. "We gather to mourn the passing of American greatness — the real thing, not cheap rhetoric from men who will never come near the sacrifice he gave so willingly, nor the opportunistic appropriation of those that live lives of comfort and privilege while he suffered and served." — Meghan McCain, eulogy for John McCain, Sept. 1.

5. "We're children. You guys, like, are the adults. You need to take some action and play a role. Work together, come over your politics and get something done." — David Hogg, a survivor of the Parkland, Fla., school shooting, in a CNN interview, Feb. 15.

6. "(I am) not smart, but genius ... and a very stable genius at that!" — President Donald Trump, in a tweet, Jan. 6.

7. "You don't have to agree with Trump but the mob can't make me not love him. We are both dragon energy. He is my brother. I love everyone." — Kanye West, in a tweet, April 25.

8. "Our country is led by those who will lie about anything, backed by those who will believe anything, based on information from media sources that will say anything." — James Comey, in a tweet, May 23.

9. "I have just signed your death warrant." — Judge Rosemarie Aquilina, addressing former USA Gymnastics doctor Larry Nassar upon sentencing him to up to 175 years in prison for sexual assault, Jan. 24.

10. "If you see anybody from that Cabinet in a restaurant, in a department store, at a gasoline station, you get out and you create a crowd! And you push back on them. And you tell them they're not welcome anymore, anywhere!" — Rep. Maxine Waters, in remarks at a rally in Los Angeles, June 23.



Giuliani

VETERANS

Hotshot Crew

BY ANDREW SELSKY
Associated Press

SALEM, Ore. — After being in firefights in Afghanistan and Iraq, members of one of America's newest elite wildfire crews are tasked with fighting fires in rugged country back home.

On the U.S. Bureau of Land Management's only hotshot crew focused on recruiting veterans, members have traded assault rifles and other weapons of war for chain saws and shovels. But, like in the military, they have camaraderie, structure and chain of command. And the occasional adrenaline rush.

"Being in a firefighter is way different than being in a wildland fire, but both are mentally taxing," said Chris Schott, who served two tours in Afghanistan with the Army's 7th Special Forces Group. "In a wildland fire, it's one's shooting at you, but conditions can go favorable to unfavorable very quickly."

The Lakeview Veterans Interagency Hotshot Crew, based in Klamath Falls, Ore., received its hotshot certification after rigorous training and testing, the Bureau of Land Management announced recently. It's now among 112 elite U.S. wildland firefighting teams and the only one targeting veterans for recruitment, the agency said.

Crew superintendent Michael McGirr said he and other managers took then-President Barack Obama's initiative to hire veterans to heart.

"We felt it was important for them to transition back home," McGirr said.

Their maturity and ability to follow and lead are benefits that quickly became apparent when the crew started operating in 2012 as a lower-classification unit, McGirr said. Their military experience also means they've used to enduring tough missions.

"It's a lot of arduous hiking in nasty terrain," McGirr said. "The steeper the terrain, that's usually where the ground hotshots are on."

Kenn Boles, a member of the crew since 2012 who did three



KARI GREER, BLM/USDA FOREST SERVICE/AP

Members of an elite fire crew out of Lakeview, Ore., work on the Cougar Creek Fire in central Washington state in August.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CHRISTOPHER SCHOTT/AP

Above: Chris Schott is seen in northern Afghanistan in 2007. **Right:** Schott works in Utah with Lakeview Veterans Interagency Hotshot Crew.

tours in Iraq as a Marine, agreed that veterans can withstand the intense work.

"You're working hard, sweating; the fire doesn't stop because of those things," he said. "It's like in combat — just because you're hungry, tired and thirsty doesn't mean the firefight stops."

The crew is on leave and hasn't been battling the recent deadly wildfires in California.

Of the 25 positions on the crew, 17 are filled by veterans, McGirr said. There are three additional openings, and McGirr said he wants to recruit female veterans too.

Schott, the Army veteran, said the crew felt they had the potential to achieve elite hotshot status after fighting fires in 2015, including one in Oregon's Crater Lake National Park that they almost had contained when winds picked up and changed direction, pushing the flames behind them.

The Bureau of Land Management is proud of the crew and efforts to develop a workforce of veterans, said Jeffrey Fedrizzi, agency deputy director for fire and aviation.

He said the men attaining hotshot status "demonstrates the exemplary quality and performance ingrained in this crew."

Study finds VA hospitals outperform others in same regions

By NIKKI WENTLING
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A new study by Dartmouth College that compares Department of Veterans Affairs hospitals with other hospitals in the same regions found VA facilities often outperform others when it comes to mortality rates and patient safety.

Researchers compared performance data at VA hospitals against non-VA facilities in 121 regions. In 14 out of 15 measures, the VA performed "significantly better" than other hospitals, according to results from the study.

"We found a surprisingly high, to me, number of cases where the VA was the best hospital in the region," said Dr. William Weeks, who led the study. "Pretty rarely was it the worst hospital."

Weeks initiated the research after reading

multiple studies from recent years that had found VA hospitals performed better than other medical systems. He was skeptical of the research, he said, because it compared data on a national level, not by region.

He wanted to take the perspective of veterans, who might get a choice between their local VA hospitals and other hospitals close by.

Weeks is a professor at the Dartmouth Institute for Health Policy and Clinical Practice and a former VA employee. He conducted the study with Alan West, who works at the White River Junction Medical Center in Vermont.

Though he used to work for the VA, Weeks said he was critical of the agency in the past. Going into the study, he thought he might find a few well-performing VA hospitals had skewed the data in previous research.

"The theory was that a few larger hospitals could be really good performers and the rest not so good," Weeks said. "And the weight of that might make national averages look better than what might be experienced by a typical veteran. That was the premise, but we found something that was a little bit surprising."

The researchers compared risk of death from heart failure and pneumonia at hospitals, as well as risk of blood clots, infections and wounds after surgery, among other measures.

"The primary drivers of making a decision are, 'I don't want to get hurt' and 'I want to live through it,'" Weeks said. "That's why we focused on these."

With the new study, researchers are sending a message to Congress to rethink efforts to expand veterans' health care into the private sector.

Earlier this year, President Donald Trump signed the VA Mission Act — major reform legislation that overhauls how the VA outsources health care to the private sector.

Under the bill, the VA and Congress are supposed to work together in coming months to create new rules dictating which veterans can use private-sector care and in what situations. The aim is to provide veterans more flexibility to see doctors outside the VA system.

"One has to wonder whether outsourcing care is the right choice if we care about veterans' outcomes," Weeks said. "The VA is, for the most part, doing at least as well as the private sector in a local setting, and pretty often are the best performers in that setting."

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WORLD

May lobbies EU leaders to save her Brexit deal

By MIKE CORDER
AND LORNE COOK
Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands — Top European Union officials on Tuesday ruled out any renegotiation of the divorce agreement with Britain as Prime Minister Theresa May fought to save her Brexit deal by lobbying leaders in Europe's capitals.

May began her quest over breakfast with Dutch counterpart Mark Rutte, a day after she abandoned a vote in the U.K. Parliament to secure support for the agreement thrashed out with the EU over more than a year. She acknowledged that the deal would be rejected in London "by a significant margin."

Rutte betrayed little of their conversation, tweeting only that they had "a useful dialogue which saw us discuss the latest Brexit developments."

But European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker warned that the agreement, almost 600 pages long, highly technical and legally binding — cannot be reopened for negotiation at a summit of EU leaders on Thursday.

He did say, however, that elements of the deal could still be clarified.

"There is no room whatsoever for renegotiation," Juncker told EU lawmakers in Strasbourg, France, as he briefed them on the summit.

Juncker, who was set to meet May on Tuesday evening, reiterated that "the deal we have achieved is the best deal possible. It is the only deal possible."

But he added that "if used intelligently, there is room enough to give further clarification and further interpretations without opening the withdrawal agreement."

EU leaders have often supplemented agreements with political declarations that clarify their interpretation of elements of an accord or provide assurances about how parts of any deal might work.

In Brussels, Danish Foreign Minister Anders Samuelsen also said that EU countries might be willing to clarify parts of the deal.

"It is always a political option to clarify if that is needed, what is meant, what kind of underlin-

ing is needed," Samuelsen told reporters.

One of the main sticking points since the Brexit talks began has been how to keep goods flowing between Northern Ireland in the U.K. and EU member country Ireland. May is sure to seek flexibility on that from her European partners.

But Juncker said that the so-called "backstop" — an insurance arrangement to ensure that no hard border appears after Brexit on March 29 — must remain, even though it was never meant to be used.

"We have a common determination to do everything to be not in the situation one day to use that backstop, but we have to prepare," he said, and underlined that "Ireland will never be left alone."

The European Parliament's Brexit point man, Guy Verhofstadt, noted that with the canceled vote in London "we have spiraled again into a new mess," and he supported Juncker's message.

"Whatever the request may be we will never let down our Irish friends. It is out of the question to renegotiate the backstop," Verhofstadt said.

But Martin Callanan, Britain's minister of state at the Department for Exiting the EU, insisted that the "U.K. cannot be trapped permanently in the backstop."

"It is very important that these have to be additional legally binding reassurances," he told reporters in Brussels, adding that what lies ahead is "a difficult and complex negotiation."

If the Brexit agreement is accepted by the U.K. Parliament, it must still be endorsed by the European Parliament before March 29.

May arrived in Berlin on Tuesday for talks with German Chancellor Angela Merkel before flying to Brussels for meetings with Juncker and EU Council President Donald Tusk, who will chair Thursday's summit.

Tusk has also ruled out renegotiating the deal.

A senior German official said May would not get any pledge of new negotiations while in Berlin. And he stressed that the chief negotiators were in Brussels, not the German capital.

Asked as he arrived at a meeting in Brussels what May can expect from Merkel, Deputy Foreign Minister Michael Roth replied: "I hope they will wish each other Merry Christmas, strength and all the best for the new year. It's good to speak to each other, but there will certainly be no promises of any kind that we will reopen matters now and renegotiate."

"It is always a political option to clarify if that is needed, what is meant, what kind of underlin-



CHRISTOPHE ENA/AP

A man walks his dog past a tag that reads "Happy Christmas Manu" in reference to French President Emmanuel Macron in Paris on Sunday. Workers on Sunday were clearing debris from protest riots.

France tallies cost of protests

Associated Press

PARIS — The French government says tax relief and other fiscal measures announced by President Emmanuel Macron to try to calm nationwide protests will cost between \$9 billion and \$11 billion.

The figure was given by government spokesman Benjamin Griveaux, speaking Tuesday to broadcaster BFM-TV.

After weeks of often violent demonstrations by so-

called "yellow vest" protesters, Macron responded Monday with measures to boost the spending power of retirees and workers, including a 100-euro increase in the minimum monthly wage.

Griveaux said the government will make savings from the state budget to help finance the measures.

The protests, including blockades of roads, have also caused substantial economic losses to businesses that have lost customers in city and town centers hit by rioting.

Johannesburg Zoo elephant's fate up for debate after she loses mate

By CHRISTOPHER TORCHIA
Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG — When the last African elephant at the Johannesburg Zoo lost her male companion to illness in September, some people said 39-year-old Lammie should be sent to a bigger sanctuary so she wouldn't spend her final years alone.

The debate is particularly sensitive because the world's biggest land mammal is known for intelligence, strong social bonds and even the ability to grieve.

The zoo now says Lammie is staying, and that a search for a new mate is underway.

The case of Lammie, born in the zoo, echoes that of Happy, an Asian elephant that has lived at the Bronx Zoo in New York since 1977, including over a decade without another elephant in the same enclosure. Some activists say Happy should go to a sanctuary with other elephants, but the zoo said in 2016 that she is "healthy and comfortable," has bonded with the people who care for her and has "tactile and auditory contact" with the zoo's other two elephants.

In Johannesburg, Lammie had lived for 17 years with Kinkel, a 35-year-old male elephant who was rescued in the wild after his trunk was caught in a snare in 2000. Since he died on Sept. 4, Lammie has been on her own, and some conservation groups say it's time to move out.

"Now that Lammie has lost her companion, she is in desperate need of a happier existence and the chance to live out her years with other elephants," Audrey Delsink, wildlife director of Humane Society International/Africa, said in a statement. She said many zoos around the world have recognized the "welfare challenges" of confining such a complex animal and that a sanctuary similar to the wild is ready to take Lammie if the Johannesburg Zoo agrees to let her go.



DENIS FARRELL/AP

Lammie, the last African elephant at the Johannesburg Zoo, is seen in her enclosure in June.

South Africa's NSPCA, an animal welfare group, appealed for an end to "the endless and redundant cycle of continuously condemning elephants to captivity for many years to come."

The Johannesburg Zoo says it serves an educational role and hosts visitors from low-income communities who don't have the means to visit wildlife parks. But Michele Pickover, director of the EMS Foundation, which lobbies on African wildlife topics, said "nobody learns anything" by seeing a "tormented elephant" in an enclosure and that watching a documentary film about elephants would be more educational.

Elephants in the wild, meanwhile, are threatened by poachers who have killed large numbers every year to supply ivory to consumers, particularly in parts of Asia.

The Johannesburg Zoo is hoping to find another elephant to join Lammie in line with regulations set out by the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums, spokeswoman Jenny Moodley said.

WORLD

Chinese diplomat vows to protect citizens abroad

By JOE McDONALD
Associated Press

BEIJING — China's foreign minister vowed Tuesday to protect its citizens abroad as a Canadian court decided whether to release a technology executive on bail in a case that has riled U.S.-Chinese relations.

Beijing will "spare no effort" to protect against "any bullying that infringes the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese citizens," Foreign Minister Wang Yi said at a conference in Shanghai.

Wang didn't mention the Huawei Technologies Ltd. executive, Meng Wanzhou, who was arrested in Vancouver, British Columbia, on U.S. charges related to possible violations of trade sanctions against Iran. But a ministry spokesman, Lu Kang, said Wang was referring to cases of all Chinese abroad, including Meng.

Meng's Dec. 1 arrest came the same day Presidents Donald Trump and Xi Jinping agreed to a 90-day cease-fire in a tariff war over Beijing's technology policy that threatens global commerce.

The arrest prompted concern that trade talks might be derailed, but Beijing indicated Tuesday they were going ahead.

China's economy czar, Vice Premier Liu He, talked by phone with U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer about the next round of negotiations, the Ministry of Commerce announced. It gave no details on preparations.

The two governments have tried to keep Meng's case separate from

the trade talks, but jitters among companies and investors have roiled global stock markets.

Washington accuses Huawei of using a Hong Kong shell company to sell equipment to Iran in violation of U.S. sanctions. It says Meng and Huawei misled banks about the company's business dealings in Iran.

A judge in Vancouver, Justice William Ehrcke, said a bail hearing would continue Tuesday for a third day.

Meng's arrest has set off debate online in China over whether to protest by boycotting Apple Inc., whose iPhone is a rival to Huawei's smartphone brand.

Nationalists called for consumers to support Chinese brands, a popular rallying cry in previous conflicts with Japan, the United States, South Korea and other governments. But in an unusual development, an equally large number of internet users criticized such calls as reckless.

"I feel ready to set off a campaign to boycott the iPhone and



ANDY WONG/AP

A woman walks by a Huawei store at a shopping mall in Beijing on Tuesday. An executive of Huawei, a Chinese technology firm, is at the center of an international dispute.

use Huawei mobile phones," said a comment on the Sina Weibo social media service. Another accused protesters of "blindly boycotting American goods" and said "it would be useful to gain more knowledge" before acting.

Chipmaker Qualcomm Inc. said Monday a Chinese court ordered a halt to imports of older Apple iPhone models in a patent dispute. The order was dated Nov. 30, according to Qualcomm, the day before Meng's arrest.

Huawei, the biggest global supplier of network gear for phone and internet companies, is the target of U.S. security concerns.

Washington has pressured other countries to limit use of its technology, warning they could be opening themselves up to surveillance and theft of information.

Washington wants to "limit Huawei's development" as a technology competitor, said Huang Yanbin, a convenience store manager in Beijing.

"The United States doesn't seem to be a very honorable country," said Huang. "I think there is a conspiracy behind this."

On Monday, a Canadian prosecutor, John Gibb-Carsley, asked the court to reject Meng's bail request. He said she has vast resources and a strong incentive to flee because the U.S. fraud charges carry a possible maximum prison term of 30 years.

Gibb-Carsley told the judge that if he does grant bail, it should include house arrest.

David Martin, Meng's lawyer, said Meng was willing to put up assets and cash worth a total of 15

million Canadian dollars, or \$11.2 million, as bond and wear an ankle monitor.

Huawei said in a statement that it had "every confidence that the Canadian and U.S. legal systems will reach a just conclusion."

Meng's arrest has added to U.S.-China trade tensions amid a fight over Beijing's technology strategy.

The United States has slapped tariffs on \$250 billion in Chinese imports in response to complaints Beijing steals American technology and forces U.S. companies to turn over trade secrets.

Tariffs on \$200 billion of those imports were scheduled to rise from 10 percent to 25 percent on Jan. 1, but Trump agreed to postpone those by 90 days while the two sides negotiate.

Yemen's warring sides discuss expanding shaky truce

Associated Press

CAIRO — Delegations from Yemen's warring sides discussed expanding a shaky truce in the key port city of Hodeida on Monday. However, neither side appeared ready to agree on initial draft proposals hoped for by the United Nations, which is sponsoring talks in Sweden and seeks to resume needed aid deliveries by sea.

One draft document obtained by The Associated Press showed an initial 16-point proposal to stop all fighting and have all troops withdraw to the city limits and, later, outside the province while allowing

U.N. oversight and setting up a local, pre-war administration. Representatives from both sides mentioned only preliminary proposals that were not accepted.

The talks, held in a castle outside Stockholm, have so far focused on implementing a broad prisoner swap between representatives from Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels and the internationally recognized government supported by the U.S. and a Saudi-led coalition. They met for a fifth day Monday.

"As always, in any round of talks, ideas are brought forward, and they could be

preliminary, they could have just been thrown out on the table," said Ali Hussein Ashal, from the government delegation. "And a lot of the ideas which have been brought forward previously, in other rounds of talks, the Houthis have refused many of them."

Earlier rebel delegation member Gamal Amer said his side had rejected a proposal, although it was unclear if it was the same one or if multiple drafts existed.

He said only that the rebels had submitted "substantive observations" about it.

Also Monday, a similar draft document

circulated outlining a gradual drawdown of the conflict in the central city of Taiz.

United Nations special envoy Martin Griffiths has said he wants to "take Hodeida out of the war" in hopes that international aid deliveries can avert famine.

The war has killed tens of thousands and made Yemen the site of the world's worst humanitarian crisis, with 22 million of its 29 million people in need of aid, according to the U.N. The two sides have for months been locked in a stalemate fight over Hodeida.

Iran confirms recent ballistic missile test that US condemned

Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran has confirmed a recent ballistic missile test that was condemned by the United States.

The semiofficial Fars news

agency on Tuesday quoted Gen. Amir Ali Hajizadeh as saying the test was an "important one." Hajizadeh, who leads the Revolutionary Guard's aerospace division, said the American outcry

"indicates that the test was very important to them."

The U.S. seized on the missile test to urge European countries to follow its lead in restoring tough sanctions on Iran.

Under the 2015 nuclear accord, Iran was urged to cease its testing of ballistic missiles, but the agreement does not forbid such tests.

President Donald Trump with-

drew the U.S. from the landmark agreement in May despite Iran's continued compliance. European nations have been working to salvage the agreement, which curbs Iran's uranium enrichment.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Ring reappears 9 years after being flushed

NJ SOMERS POINT — A southern New Jersey woman has her wedding ring back, nine years after she accidentally flushed it down her toilet.

Paula Stanton was sure the diamond-encrusted gold ring was lost forever after she noticed it wasn't on her finger while she was cleaning her bathroom.

Luckily, a member of Somers Point's public works department remembered Stanton mentioning the ring about three years ago.

Ted Gogol was doing maintenance work near a manhole about 400 feet from Stanton's house. He told the Press of Atlantic City he saw a shiny object sitting the mud. It turned out to be Stanton's ring, and after boiling it in peroxide and lemon juice she is wearing it again.

Rat found in vending machine at high school

FL DELRAY BEACH — Students at a Florida high school found an unwelcome surprise in a vending machine: a rat climbing the rows of packaged snacks and drinks.

Video of the rat shot by an 11th-grader quickly spread on social media among students at Atlantic Community High School in Delray Beach.

In the video aired by news station WPTV, the brown rat appears as large as a snack-size bag of chips.

A Palm Beach County Schools statement said the vending machine was quickly locked Tuesday to keep students from using it.

The district says the vending machine company was alerted and an exterminator was called to the school.

Mares donated to boost Chincoteague population

VA CHINCOTEAGUE — Three Chincoteague ponies have returned to their ancestral Virginia island to help boost the herd's population.

Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Co. spokeswoman Denise Bowden wrote in a Facebook post that this year has been one of the most difficult in terms of herd loss. The fire company manages the wild herd.

This month's additions to the herd are all mares. Oreo, Star and Treasure are genetically Chincoteague ponies, but the Chincoteague Pony Pedigree Database says Star was born in Texas.

Police investigate theft of \$5K worth of wine

NH HOOKSETT — New Hampshire state police are investigating the theft of about \$5,000 worth of wine from a state liquor store over several weeks.

Police said the thefts happened at the Interstate 93 northbound store in Hooksett.

Police are requesting the public's assistance in identifying a woman who is a person of interest.

THE CENSUS

835

The number of tuba players who performed "Silent Night" on Friday at a Kansas City, Mo., arena, smashing a Guinness World Record. The previous record was 502 tuba players in California in 2007. The concert was part of the annual TubaChristmas event, which is organized by the Kansas City Symphony. Symphony Executive Director Frank Byrne said the musicians ranged in age from 11 to 86. A Guinness official was on hand to verify the feat.



RON HERMENS, RAPID CITY (S.D.) JOURNAL/AP

The puck stops here

Family members and friends play a pick-up game of ice hockey at Wilson Park in Rapid City, S.D., on Sunday.

Dogs get snow boots at this police department

SD RAPID CITY — A police dog in South Dakota is learning how to walk a beat in snow boots.

Video posted by the Rapid City police department shows Jary trying to adjust having the boots on its paws. The dog awkwardly lifts its legs while getting used to the new boots.

The department says it equips its officers for the chilly weather, "even the furry ones!"

Dumped pets create big problems for lake

TN KNOXVILLE — Workers in Knoxville have removed three truckloads of invasive weeds from a local lake, including aquarium grasses that officials believe were dumped there by residents.

The Knoxville News Sentinel reported the city has spent nearly \$760,000 cleaning up the one-acre lake in Fountain City Park.

Efforts to clean the lake have

been going on for more than 30 years.

First, the feces from abandoned pet ducks created a massive algae problem. Once the algae was under control, the invasive grasses took over.

David Hagerman, a stormwater engineer for the city, told the paper that people may intend to give their aquarium inhabitants a chance at life. But he says the reality is the animals have almost no chance of survival and the exotic plants overtake native vegetation.

Man accused of setting holiday decor on fire

SC SUMMERTON — A South Carolina man is accused of setting a Summerville home and his neighbors' Christmas decor on fire.

News outlets reported Cameron Lewis Baum, 29, was arrested Friday and charged with arson. Summerville police said officers responded to reports of someone lighting several neighbors' personal property on fire.

Police said Baum was detained for setting fire to Christmas ornaments and igniting a decoration of a snowman at another home. Police said Summerville Fire Rescue also responded and fought a house fire believed to have been started by Baum.

A police report said Baum also is accused of breaking into a garage of another home and trying to set it on fire.

EMT's license suspended for drunken drive to call

ME BATH — A Maine firefighter who pleaded guilty to driving under the influence while working as a paramedic has been sentenced to a 150-day license suspension.

The Bangor Daily News reported James Perry, 55, was also ordered to pay a \$500 fine during his sentencing.

Perry was responding to a suspected drowning in Bath in September as a paramedic for Mid Coast Hospital when police say they noticed signs of impairment.

Police arrested Perry, and

court documents show his blood alcohol level was tested at 0.08 percent.

Police later determined there was no drowning.

A spokeswoman for the hospital said Friday that Perry is no longer employed there.

Observation wheel to remain through June

OH CINCINNATI — The Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber said the large SkyStar observation wheel will remain in the city through June 2019.

Officials said the mobile observation wheel was supposed to be moved on Dec. 2. WCPO-TV reported an estimated 100,000 people have ridden the attraction since it first arrived in August.

SkyStar official Todd Schneider said the people of Cincinnati have been very welcoming, saying, "We're thrilled to stay another six months."

From wire reports

FACES

Sequel to her success

Dolly Parton builds on other film hits with song from 'Dumplin'

By MIKE CIDONI LENNOX

Associated Press

Dolly Parton says she never really aspired to be "The Girl in the Movies," the title of her Golden Globe-nominated song from the new comedy "Dumplin'."

Co-written with hit machine Linda Perry, the song expresses the rebellious, plus-sized title character's secret longing to fit in, to have happy Hollywood endings — just like "the girl in the movies."

While Parton said she could relate to many elements of the song's lyrics, "I never had a dream of being on the screen. I figured I'd grow into that, and I did. But my music was most important."

Parton was a country superstar and had crossed over to the pop charts with the 1977 smash "Here You Come Again" when Hollywood called.

"I had been approached about acting in some things, but I wasn't quite ready," she recalled. "Then Jane (Fonda) came to me and said that they want to do this movie with me and Lily (Tomlin), and I thought, 'Well, this is the perfect time, if I'm ever going to do it, because if it was a hit, we could all take credit. But if it was a flop, I could blame it on them.'" Parton explained, with a laugh.

The film, the searing workplace comedy "9 to 5," became the No. 2 box-office film released in 1980 behind only "The Empire Strikes Back," according to Box Office Mojo. "9 to 5" also inspired Parton's only solo pop-chart topper, a TV series and a Broadway musical. The title song earned Parton an Oscar nomination, and Parton's new compositions for the stage musical were honored with a Tony nomination.

Parton, 72, went on to score a handful of other box-office successes as an actress, including the screen adaptations of the stage hits "The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas" (1982) and "Steel Magnolias" (1989). And she provided her voice to the 2011

animated blockbuster "Gnomeo and Juliet."

But it's as a songwriter where Parton has perhaps scored biggest on film, with Whitney Houston's explosive cover of Parton's plaintive ballad "I Will Always Love You" from 1992's "The Bodyguard" becoming one of the best-selling singles of all time.

"People always tell me, 'I thought that was Whitney's song. I didn't know you wrote it. I thought she wrote it,'" Parton said, with a smile, adding, "And I tell them, 'She can have the credit. I'll just take the cash.'"

The song "9 to 5" has been a gift that keeps on giving for Parton, too. Parton's original recording accompanied a back-to-work montage in this spring's "Deadpool 2."

Like the song, the nearly 40-year-old "9 to 5" movie continues to resonate with contemporary audiences — and little wonder, since it tackles pay-parity issues, as well as sexual harassment.

Cue the sequel.

"Pat Resnick (who co-wrote the original film) and (actress-director) Rashida Jones are working on a new script," Parton said. "Fox already bought it. Jane, Lily and I said, 'Yes, we would do it,' and there will be three new girls in it, too. Forty years later, it's still addressing a lot of those issues we had back then."

Parton said plans are to shoot the film next year. "Dumplin'" opens in select cinemas and debuts on Netflix this weekend. The Golden Globe Awards will be presented Jan. 6 in Beverly Hills, Calif.

The Recording Academy will honor Parton for her musical and philanthropic work as 2019 MusiCares Person of the Year on Feb. 8, two days before the 61st Grammy Awards in Los Angeles.



Gifford to leave NBC's 'Today' show in April

Associated Press

Kathie Lee Gifford will be putting aside her morning glass of wine and will step away from the NBC's "Today" show in April.

NBC News chief Noah Oppenheim told staffers Tuesday morning that Gifford will leave after 11 years on the show, most recently hosting the 10 a.m. hour alongside Hoda Kotb and sipping plenty of reds.

In a memo to staff, Oppenheim called Gifford, 65, "one of the most enduring and endearing talents in morning television. In short — she is a legend." He said she will focus on her film, music and book projects.

In the memo, Oppenheim said Gifford said she was leaving "with a grateful heart but I'm truly excited for this new creative season in my life."

Globes honor will be named after Burnett

The Golden Globe Awards will introduce a new TV special achievement trophy at next month's telecast and name it after its first recipient — comedic icon Carol Burnett.

The Hollywood Foreign Press Association said Tuesday the Carol Burnett Award — the small-screen version of the group's film counterpart, the Cecil B. DeMille Award — will annually honor someone "who has made outstanding contributions to television on or off the screen."

The first Carol Burnett Award will, fittingly, go to Burnett, a five-time Golden Globe winner who was the first woman to host a variety sketch show, "The Carol Burnett Show."

In a statement, association President Meher Tatna said: "We are profoundly grateful for her contributions to the entertainment industry and honored to celebrate her legacy forever at the Golden Globes."

'Modern Family' star had second transplant

"Modern Family" star Sarah Hyland said she had a second kidney transplant last year, replacing a kidney from her father with another from her brother.

Hyland details her lifelong health struggles in an interview in Self magazine, and tweeted Monday that she hopes it "spreads

awareness of organ donation" and "brings a sense of support" to the chronically ill.

Hyland, 28, was born with kidney dysplasia, which causes cysts to grow on underdeveloped kidneys.

Her father was the donor for her first transplant in 2012, and when her body began rejecting that kidney, and dialysis treatments didn't help, she had a second transplant in September of 2017, this time with her younger brother as donor.

Hyland has appeared on the ABC series "Modern Family" since she was 18.

DuVernay, Witherspoon join up for auction

Ava DuVernay, Reese Witherspoon, Geena Davis and Kerry Washington are among the Hollywood figures teaming up to mark the one-year anniversary of Time's Up with a celebrity auction to benefit the group's legal fund.

The Time's Up campaign kicked off at the Golden Globes in January. To date, the legal fund has raised more than \$22 million.

Among the items on auction

will be an opportunity to attend a post-production session with director DuVernay on her Netflix miniseries "Central Park 5," a coffee date with Davis and meet-and-greets with Witherspoon at the "Big Little Lies" season 2 premiere, or Washington at her Broadway show, "American Son."

The Time's Up Legal Defense Fund says that to date it has connected more than 3,750 women and men to legal resources.

Other news

■ Grammy Award-winning band Imagine Dragons will perform at halftime of the College Football Playoff championship game on Jan. 7 at Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara, Calif., ESPN and Interscope Records announced Monday.

■ A production assistant on the Starz network drama series "Power" was struck and killed by a vehicle while setting up traffic cones for a film production in Brooklyn. Police say 63-year-old Pedro Jimenez, of Manhattan, was pronounced dead at a hospital following the accident just before 4:30 a.m. Monday. Production on



RICHARD SHOTWELL, INVISION/AP
Kathie Lee Gifford is leaving 'Today' after 11 years.

the series has been suspended.

■ Court TV is being revived, after dying in 2007 when its supply of high-profile trials ended. Katz Networks said Monday it will start the network again in May, and already has commitments to show it in about half of the American homes with television service. The 24-hour network was popular in the 1990s when the O.J. Simpson and Menendez brothers' trial absorbed attention, but was folded and turned into the crime-oriented network truTV.

NATION

Church: Nuns embezzled school funds to gamble

BY JOHN ROGERS
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Two nuns who worked for decades at a Catholic school in California embezzled a "substantial" amount of money from tuition and other funds and used it to pay for gambling trips to Las Vegas, church officials said Monday.

The embezzlement from Saint James Catholic School in Torrance appears to have gone on for as long as 10 years, Archdiocese of Los Angeles media relations Director Adrian Alarcon said.

During that time, Sister Mary Margaret Kreiper was the school's principal and Sister Lana Chang taught eighth-grade students. Both retired earlier this year. Neither has been charged with a crime.

The amount taken from tuition payments and other funds is still being tabulated, Alarcon said, adding she couldn't confirm some reports that said it was as much as \$500,000.

'Sister Mary Margaret and Sister Lana have expressed to me ... the deep remorse they each feel for their actions.'

Monsignor Michael Meyers

In a letter to parents, Monsignor Michael Meyers called it "substantial."

"This matter came to our attention during financial reviews in connection with the change in leadership at our school," he said, adding that no one else was implicated.

Alarcon said it is routine to conduct such a review after a principal retires.

Neither nun could be immediately reached for comment.

Meyers said both nuns acknowledged the theft when confronted, apologized and are cooperating with an ongoing investigation. He said they and their order, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, have prom-

ised to pay back the money.

"Sister Mary Margaret and Sister Lana have expressed to me, and asked that I convey to you, the deep remorse they each feel for their actions and ask for your forgiveness and prayers," Meyers said in his letter. "They and their order pray that you have not lost trust or faith in the educators and administrators of the school."

The archdiocese has notified police, but Meyers said church officials don't plan to press charges at this point and instead want to see that the matter resolved internally with the money repaid and the nuns disciplined by their order.

Sister Mary Margaret worked at the school for 29 years. Sister Lana taught there for 20 years.

Scientists: Another mass of warm water is slowly re-emerging in Gulf of Alaska

Associated Press

JUNEAU, Alaska — Another mass of warmer than normal water is slowly re-emerging in the Gulf of Alaska, scientists said.

The new "blob" could affect weather and fisheries in southeastern Alaska, but scientists said it doesn't appear as strong as the first one in 2013, KTVO Public Media in Juneau reported Monday.

Washington state climatologist Nick Bond coined the term "blob" to refer to the water mass in the Pacific Northwest.

"Without winds to draw heat out of the ocean and to mix up colder water from below, the near-surface waters, again, got quite a bit warmer than normal," Bond said.

The gulf water is about 4 degrees Fahrenheit warmer than normal, but it is not as hot or as deep as the 2013 blob.

'This isn't the new normal. But still, it's kind of alarming that we're talking about this sort of thing again so soon.'

Nick Bond
Washington state
climatologist

Thoman, a climatologist with the Alaska Center for Climate Assessment and Policy.

Southeastern Alaska is al-

ready seeing warmer-than-normal weather. Juneau's November was 5 degrees above normal, according to the National Weather Service.

The warmer weather could disrupt fish behavior. The previous warm ocean conditions likely contributed to shifts in pollock spawn timing and extended the range of salmon.

Andy Piston, a pink and chum salmon project leader with the state Department of Fish and Game, said a weak pink salmon run of 18 million is projected for next season. The last blob's effects were not uniform on pink salmon runs, he said.

"Some stocks did outstanding, and some stocks right next door did very poorly. A lot did average," Piston said. "So part of the problem is that we don't know exactly where in the ocean individual stocks are going, for the most part."

Delta cracks down on support animals

Associated Press

ATLANTA — If you're planning a flight longer than eight hours, Delta Air Lines says you can't bring an emotional-support animal with you.

The rules for pups are getting tighter too. Neither support animals nor trained service ani-

mals will be allowed on any Delta flights if they are under 4 months old.

Delta said the changes take effect Dec. 18.

The airline said exceptions will be made until Feb. 1 for customers who already bought a ticket and asked to bring a support animal.

Airlines are tightening rules on animals, saying their numbers have skyrocketed and some have relieved themselves or bitten other animals — and in one case, a Delta passenger.

People who fill out the forms to travel with a support animal avoid pet-carriage fees.

tion. Her website has been critical of the government of Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte, and she claims the charges are politically motivated.

Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo have been imprisoned for nearly a year in Myanmar after investigating a massacre of Rohingya Muslims.

Four journalists and a sales assis-

tant were killed by a gunman at the Capital Gazette newspaper in June. Since 1972, Time has selected individuals or groups to appear on its covers for the end-of-the-year feature. This was the first time someone named was no longer alive. Those chosen this year will appear in four different cover photos.

President Donald Trump, who was chosen Person of the Year in 2016, was second runner-up. "His ultimate impact may be determined as much by the resistance he engenders as by the goals he pursues," the magazine said.

Special prosecutor Robert Mueller was third runner-up.



TIME magazine calls the group it has selected as 2018 Person of the Year "guardians" of the truth.

4 journalists, newspaper named Person of the Year

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Time magazine named four journalists and a newspaper on Tuesday as its 2018 Person of the Year for standing up for the truth in the face of persecution and violence.

The group, which Time calls the "guardians," includes slain Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi; the Capital Gazette in Annapolis, Md., where five people were shot and killed at the newspaper's offices in June; Philippine journalist Maria Ressa, who has been arrested; and Reuters journalists Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo, who have been detained in Myanmar for nearly a year.

"They are representative of a broader fight by countless others around the world — as of Dec. 10, at least 52 journalists have been murdered in 2018 — who risk all to tell the story of our time," Editor-in-Chief Edward Felsenthal wrote in an essay.

Time selected them "for taking great risks in pursuit of greater truths, for the imperfect but essential quest for facts that are central to civil discourse, for speaking up and speaking out."

Khashoggi was killed two months ago when The Washington Post columnist, who had lived in the U.S., visited Saudi Arabia's consulate in Turkey for paperwork so he could get married. He had been critical of the Saudi regime.

Ressa is an award-winning Philippine journalist who, along with the online news service she heads, has been sued for tax eva-

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OPINION

Google's China problem is US' China problem

BY ELI LAKE
Bloomberg Opinion

When employees first learned of the Google project known as Dragonfly, there was an internal uprising.

It is easy to see why. The project, a search engine for China, would not only help a totalitarian regime censor the web, it could also track internet users. Thousands of Googlers, as they are known, eventually went public with their opposition, signing an open letter in protest of the project. Is it any surprise that a company that canceled a contract with the Pentagon to sort through drone video images would be queasy about helping the Chinese Communist Party consolidate control over its people?

But there is another view within Google: that Dragonfly is not diametrically but crucial to the company's mission. These employees — some 500 of them so far — have also signed a letter making their case on an internal company message board. Interestingly, the campaign was organized by Chinese nationals inside Google.

The letter, which Techcrunch first reported last month, argues that Google needs to at least try to get back into China before writing off a country of almost 1.4 billion people. "The standards of acceptable surveillance are unclear," says an appendix to the letter, which Techcrunch did not publish. (I obtained it independently from a source inside the company, who also told me about its provenance.)

Google has yet to announce its plan for Dragonfly. But one core issue raised by this letter goes far beyond Google: how the Chinese government pressures and deploys its citizens in order to expand its power and influence.

It sounds paranoid. But the role of Chinese citizens in Chinese statecraft is raising concerns in official and unofficial Washington. Members of Congress have

The role of Chinese citizens in Chinese statecraft is raising concerns in official and unofficial Washington.

warned about Chinese students in U.S. universities. The Justice Department has a new initiative aimed in part at prosecuting unregistered Chinese agents of influence.

Chinese defense universities often task promising students with missions to obtain valuable technology abroad, for example, according to a recent report from the Hoover Institution. Larry Diamond, a senior fellow at Hoover, told me, "If you understand how China operates, it would be shocking to the point of disbelief if they were not in an organized fashion trying to penetrate Google."

Google has a difficult history in China. As my Bloomberg colleague Mark Bergen has reported, Google's leadership was initially (and cautiously) optimistic about bringing its search engine to China in 2006. Google developed a compromise with the Chinese government: Users would be informed when search results were being filtered. By 2009, however, that optimism had turned to dread with the discovery that hackers had stolen information on Chinese dissidents, along with source code for the company's treasured search engine.

Even after the hack, Google — like all Silicon Valley companies — continued to hire Chinese engineers and computer scientists. Spokesmen for Google would not comment on the record, nor did they provide information on how many of the 80,000 employees of Alphabet, Google's parent company, are Chinese nationals.

Chinese nationals inside Google have at times clashed with its techno-libertarian culture. One infamous example, detailed in a book by the former head of Google's

"people operations," comes from 2008, when the company cafeteria offered employees a "Free Tibet Goji-Chocolate Creme Pie." This offended a Chinese national at the company, who sent an email to Chief Executive Larry Page. The chef was immediately suspended — then, after a companywide email thread that at the time was the longest in Google history, reinstated. An engineer who was at Google at the time told me the whole controversy was "ridiculous."

The Tibetan pie incident is trivial compared with the implications of Dragonfly. But the basic issue is the same: Chinese citizens are subjects of a totalitarian government. This does not mean that every Chinese national at Google is a spy or a plant. It does mean that Chinese Googlers are more likely to face pressure from their government than Googlers who come from more open societies. Just like the old Soviet Union, the Chinese state views its people as its appendages.

Is Google taking this issue seriously? A Google spokesman told me that the company has no special screening mechanism for hiring Chinese nationals — such as whether their relatives are senior members of the Communist Party or whether they were schooled at universities entwined with the military — beyond what the company does to verify the employment history and expertise of any other prospective employee.

Ten years ago, that approach would not have been controversial. The West was still optimistic that, over time, China would become a more open economy and society. Indeed, companies like Google were supposed to help make China "more like us." Now it's becoming clearer that it's just as likely to be the other way around.

Eli Lake is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist covering national security and foreign policy. He was the senior national security correspondent for the Daily Beast and covered national security and intelligence for The Washington Times, the New York Sun and UPI.

The slippery slope of transactional justification

BY JOHN M. CRISP
Tribune News Service

Come among those who take a skeptical view of Mohammed bin Salman, crown prince of Saudi Arabia.

This photogenic future king first attracted notice as a potential reformer with inclinations toward openness and modernity. Movie theaters reopened in Saudi Arabia; some women were allowed to drive.

But other women were jailed and reportedly tortured for agitating for their rights. Wealthy Saudis were detained and extorted without due process. Saudi Arabia is a land where citizens can be publicly decapitated or flogged. And MBS, as he is known, gives no indication of concern about the stunning humanitarian crisis in Yemen brought on by Saudi involvement in that country's civil war.

And let's face it: We can be pretty sure that the prince ordered or approved the murder and dismemberment of his most prominent critic, Jamal Khashoggi.

But when a crown prince and his country behave like this, what is the proper response from a country like ours, which has a deep commitment to the rule of law and to morality above self-interest?

Or do we? President Donald Trump's approach to the Khashoggi murder has been transactional. I don't remember using the word "transactional" much before 2016, but during the Trump era, this useful word's meaning is clear enough: Our

American sense of morality and decency is all well and good at home, but in the practical, dangerous external world, where arms sales and valuable resources such as petroleum are at stake, sometimes we just have to look away from human rights violations rather than put our interests at risk just because one Arab has murdered another one.

This would not be the first time that we've compromised abroad the moral principles that we cherish at home, nor is Trump the first president to adopt a see-no-evil attitude toward an unprincipled leader like MBS.

In fact, a black-and-white, all-or-nothing moral position has always been extremely difficult to maintain in the practical world. We abhor torture, for example, and most Americans — though not all, by any means — condemn it in the strongest terms. But it doesn't take much brutality or desperation or threat or fear — in war or after 9/11, for example — to overcome our principled rejection of torture, and, in time, we're subjecting enemy combatants and suspected terrorists to various forms of torture, the same as everyone else.

In fact, the neuroscientist and public intellectual Sam Harris has searched in vain for a philosophical distinction between the most severe torture that we might imagine and the American firebombing of Germany and Japan during World War II, which resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians, including

many, many children.

If we, a putative "Christian nation," can find ways to rationalize — and we do — the excruciating deaths of thousands of children, why would we be reluctant to torture a suspect in order to obtain information that could prevent a terrorist attack?

I don't have a good answer for this conundrum. Complete moral consistency may be just an elusive aspiration, beyond the reach of any of us except, perhaps, monks and devoted ascetics.

But the fact that we can't always sort out the complicated moral cases doesn't relieve us of the obligation to act morally in straightforward cases that abound with clarity.

Mohamed bin Salman's murder of Jamal Khashoggi is such a case. Our response calls for more rigor than a dismissive "Maybe he did, maybe he didn't." Some politicians and officials have claimed a more demanding moral high ground, but one has the feeling that our outrage won't last long, and soon we'll be back to business as usual with MBS.

This is unfortunate. Doing the right thing — even knowing what the right thing is — isn't always easy. But the failure to act when the moral case is clear makes it more difficult to act when the case is complicated. Once we drift too far toward a self-serving, "transactional" amorality, we will be difficult to ever find our way back.

John M. Crisp, an op-ed columnist for Tribune News Service, lives in Georgetown, Texas.

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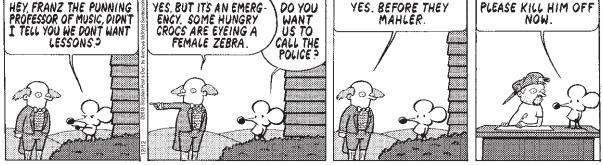
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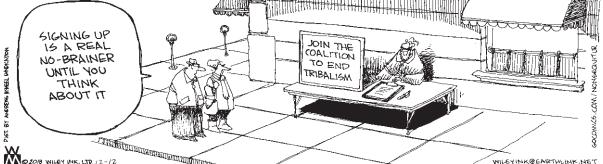
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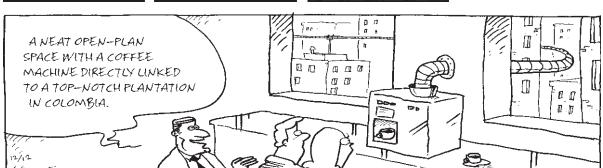
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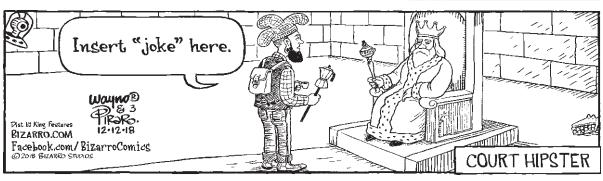
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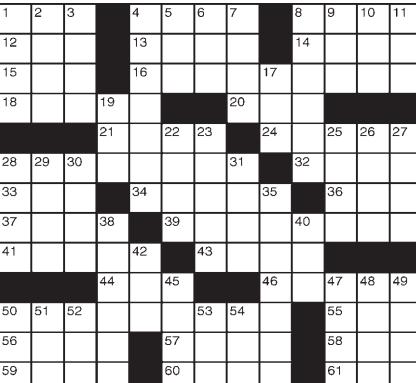
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18 Stuffy sort
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21 Computer brand
24 Actress Fox
28 Intellectually stimulating act
32 Takeout order?
33 Assoc.
34 Wise ones
36 One-time link
37 Fibs
39 Traveler's digression
41 Finished
43 Conks out
44 Small batteries
46 Cartoon duck
50 School excursion
55 Old Olds
56 Aviation prefix
57 Car
58 Pac. counterpart
59 Campus VIP

- 60 Oboe insert
61 Tibetan bovine

- 27 Tide variety
28 Golf target
29 Ireland
30 Mellowed
31 Mani counterpart
35 Bean container
38 Spring, for one
40 Airport screening org.
42 — "Kapital"
45 Rating unit
47 Unravel
48 Greek salad cheese
49 Egg part
50 Scoundrel
51 Grant's foie
52 Coach Parseghian
53 Wish undone
54 Mineral suffix

Answer to Previous Puzzle

L	I	E	S	B	R	A	G	T	S	K
A	L	E	C	A	I	R	E	E	N	E
P	E	N	H	O	D	L	E	R	N	O
O	P	I	E	M	E	O	W	S	O	S
C	O	H	O	S	M	A	S	C	M	A
O	P	E	L	I	R	O	N	C	L	A
M	E	N	A	D	O	B	E	O	L	E
A	C	H	I	L	L	E	S	S	C	W
O	K	A	Y	C	A	K	E	A	K	E
G	L	U	E	D	K	E	E	L	L	E
L	O	S	D	E	N	M	O	T	H	E
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12-12

CRYPTOQUIP

P V M S W S P M F Y W S K T D T S A
 W S H M S V F K M W T N P S B M
 H F Y T A K V T N D S Y H P Y T D B .
 V M K C P J C N P T A P V M
 N V F Z Z J M .

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF YOU SUFFERED WITH THE FLU ON SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, I WOULD SAY YOU HAD A WEAKENED WEEKEND.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: W equals M

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STARS AND STRIPES®

COLLEGE FOOTBALL/NBA

Playoff teams put 10 on first team

Semifinalists combine for 17 All-Americans; No. 1 Tide lead with six across three teams

BY RALPH D. RUSSO
Associated Press

The College Football Playoff semifinalists combined to place 10 players on The Associated Press All-American first team, including a high of four from No. 1 Alabama.

The Crimson Tide had six players chosen to the three All-American teams, more than any other school. No. 2 Clemson has three first-teamers, No. 4 Oklahoma has two All-Americans — including quarterback and Heisman Trophy winner Kyler Murray — and No. 3 Notre Dame had one.

The Tide and Sooners meet in the Orange Bowl on Dec. 29, and the Tigers play the Fighting Irish at the Cotton Bowl that day. The winners meet in the College Football Playoff national championship game Jan. 7 at Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara, Calif.

The playoff teams combined for 17 overall selections on the teams chosen by a panel of AP poll voters and released Monday.

The Tide placed two players on each side of the ball, with Outland Trophy winner Quinnen Williams highlighting the defense. Receiver Jerry Jeudy, offensive tackle Jonah Williams and safety Deionte Thompson also made the first team while Tua Tagovailoa was the second-team quarterback.

Tagovailoa finished second behind Murray in the Heisman voting on Saturday. Ohio State's Dwayne Haskins was the third-team quarterback after finishing third in the Heisman voting.

Clemson placed defensive linemen Christian Wilkins and Clelin Ferrell on the first team, and offensive tackle Mitch Hyatt. Cornerback Julian Love represented Notre Dame on the first team.

Clemson, Oklahoma and LSU each had four players on the three teams, trailing only Alabama. Notre Dame, Kentucky, Iowa, Mississippi State, Texas A&M, Washington and Wisconsin each had three overall selections.

Kentucky placed two players on the first team: linebacker Josh Allen and guard Bunchy Stallings. The Wildcats hadn't had an AP All-American since receiver kick returner Derek Abbey in 2002.

FIRST TEAM OFFENSE

Quarterback — Kyler Murray, junior, Oklahoma; **Running backs** — Jonathan Taylor, sophomore, Wisconsin; Darrell Henderson, senior, Memphis; **Tackles** — Quinnen Williams, junior, Alabama; Mitch Hyatt, senior, Clemson

Guards — Beau Benzschawel, senior, Wisconsin; Bunchy Stallings, senior, Kentucky; **Centers** — Garrett Bradbury, senior, North Carolina State; **Right end** — Jace Stenberg, junior, Texas A&M

Wide receivers — Jerry Jeudy, sophomore, Alabama; Marquise Brown, junior, Oklahoma; **All-purpose player** — Rondale Moore, freshman, Purdue

Kicker — Andre Szmyt, freshman, Syracuse

DEFENSE

Ends — Clelin Ferrell, junior, Clemson; Samuel Smith, junior, Northwestern

Tackles — Christian Wilkins, junior, Alabama; Christian Wilkins, senior, Clemson

Linebackers — Jalen Allen, senior, Kentucky; Devin White, junior, LSU; Ben Burtch, senior, Wisconsin

Cornerbacks — Tre'Davious White, senior, Georgia; Julian Love, junior, Notre Dame

Safeties — Jordan Davis, senior, LSU; Deontere Thompson, junior, Alabama

Punter — Braden Mann, junior, Texas A&M

SECOND TEAM OFFENSE

Quarterback — Tua Tagovailoa, sophomore, Alabama

Running backs — Travis Etienne, sophomore, Clemson; Trayveon Williams, junior, Texas A&M

Tackles — Dalton Risner, senior, Kansas State; Andrew Thomas, sophomore, Georgia

Guards — Matt Peart, senior, Oklahoma; Kyle Wiltjer, sophomore, Stanford

Center — Dalton Risner, sophomore, Alabama

Right end — TJ Hockenson, sophomore, Iowa

Wide receivers — Tyuan Wallace, sophomore, Oklahoma State; Andy Bella, senior, Massachusetts

All-purpose player — Greedy Williams, sophomore, Wake Forest

Kicker — Cole Tracy, senior, LSU

DEFENSE

Ends — Monte Morris, senior, Mississippi State; Jachai Polite, junior, Florida

Tackles — Jerry Tillery, senior, Notre Dame; Deondre Francois, senior, Louisville

Linebackers — Devin Bush, junior, Michigan; David Long Jr., junior, West Virginia; Jordan Clark, senior, Penn State

Cornerbacks — Greedy Williams, sophomore, LSU; Byron Murphy, sophomore, Washington

Safeties — Taylor Rapp, junior, Washington; Amari Howard, junior, Iowa

Punter — Matt Weinhauer, senior, Utah

THIRD TEAM OFFENSE

Quarterback — Dwayne Haskins, sophomore, Ohio State

Running backs — Benny Snell, junior, Kentucky; Eric Benjamin, sophomore, Missouri

Tackles — Andre Dillard, senior, Washington State; Cody Ford, junior, Oklahoma

Guards — Terrence Prescod, senior, North Carolina State; Chris Lindstrom, senior, Minnesota

Center — Michael Ojemudia, junior, Ohio State

Right end — Noah Fant, junior, Iowa

Wide receivers — AJ Brown, junior, Mississippi State; David Sills V, senior, West Virginia

All-purpose player — JJ Taylor, sophomore, Arizona

Kicker — Matt Gay, senior, Utah

DEFENSE

Ends — Chase Winovich, senior, Michigan; Jaylon Ferguson, senior, Louisiana State

Tackles — Jeffrey Simmons, junior, Michigan State; Jordan Davis, senior, LSU

Linebackers — Padily Fisher, sophomore, Northwestern; David Woodward, sophomore, Utah State; Te'von Coney, senior, Notre Dame

Cornerbacks — Hailey Cheepers, junior, Boston College; Lavert Hill, junior, Michigan State

Safeties — Andre Cisca, freshman, Syracuse; Jonathan Abram, senior, Mississippi State

Punters — James Smith, sophomore, Cincinnati

FOURTH-TEAM BREAKDOWN

By school (first-team selections—overall)

Alabama — 4

Kentucky — 3

Oklahoma — 2

Texas A&M — 2

Wisconsin — 2

Georgia — 1

Memphis — 1

Northern Illinois — 1

North Carolina State — 1

Notre Dame — 1

Purdue — 1

Stanford — 1

Washington — 1

By conference

SEC — 11

ACC — 5

BIG TEN — 2

American — 1

MAC — 1

Independent — 1



MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ/AP

Heat guard Dwyane Wade, left, shakes hands with the Lakers' LeBron James at the end of Monday's game in Los Angeles. It likely was the final meeting between the two.

Wade, James embrace final chance to compete on court

BY GREG BEACHAM
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES

Dwyane Wade will be spending a lot of time in Los Angeles while he settles into retirement next year. He already has a house here, and his wife's acting career would undoubtedly benefit from more time in Hollywood.

LeBron James is a newly minted Southern Californian himself, and he's already hatching schemes to occupy his former teammate, longtime rival and permanent friend.

"I told him, 'No one likes to work out by themselves,'" James said with a grin. "So he can come to Staples. He can come to the practice facility anytime he wants to get workouts in. He'll be around a lot more personally for me, so I'll love that."

Wade still had 56 regular-season games left in his self-declared final NBA season with the Miami Heat, but he passed a major milestone in that progression when he lined up against James for the final time Monday night in the Los Angeles Lakers' 108-105 victory.

The result wasn't the most important part of the night to either man. They were wrapped up in the pure thrill — in the chance to face off for the final time in two incredible basketball careers that have been chronologically parallel, frequently intersecting and always momentous.

"I knew that at some point in the game, it was going to hit me that this was the last time we were competing against each other," Wade said. "It hit me right away, once that buzzer sounded and we got the opportunity on the court to just look at each other and be like, 'Man, this has been fun. This has been one hell of a ride, and we've enjoyed it together.'"

James put up 28 points, 12 assists and nine rebounds. Wade scored all 15 of his points in the second half to go with 10 assists and five boards.

But the best moments arrived late when James and Wade finally guarded each other, playing one last one-on-one game for keeps.

Defense won out on both ends, probably because they know each other well enough to take away their strengths. They funneled each other to drive to their more uncomfortable sides, and James forced Wade to attempt a 27-foot turnaround, fadeaway three-pointer that missed badly with 7.2 seconds left.

Wade was open when he missed a three that would have put the Heat ahead with 22.5 seconds left.

"I needed that one," Wade said with a grimace. "I wanted it so bad. I think I wanted it too much. It would have definitely been memorable. But this is my last time playing against this guy, you know? This is the holy grail in the NBA. Unless we figure this thing out and we go to the Finals, this is the holy grail for me. The competition of playing against the game's greatest player. Playing it in LA. I think him bringing us to this stage for our last hurrah on this stage. It gets no better than this."

Barring a change of Wade's retirement plans or that incredibly unlikely NBA Finals matchup, they'll never face each other in a real game — and the Lakers' victory put James ahead of Wade 16-15 in their head-to-head matchups over their career.

James marveled at the symmetry in this final showdown, but both players said their times together meant a whole lot more than their times in opposing uniforms.

James and Wade won two NBA championships and four straight Eastern Conference titles together in Miami, along with their Olympic gold medals from Beijing.

"The game is going to take care of itself, but just the fact that we were on the floor doing what we love to do, that's what's more important," James said. "Wins and losses are going to happen throughout the course of your career, but those moments right there, you can't ever get back."

James and Wade swapped jerseys after the final buzzer, their bittersweet emotions overshadowed by the excitement of the moment and the possibilities of the future.

"It's the end of a storybook," James said. "One of the best movies you could ever see. It's too hard to put into words. Thank God they're staying the night. We get to have dinner (later). I know he has more games, but that's the last one for us."

The game is going to take care of itself, but just the fact that we were on the floor doing what we love to do, that's what's more important. ’

LeBron James
Lakers star

NBA

Scoreboard

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division

	L	W	Pct	GB
Toronto	21	7	.750	—
Philadelphia	19	9	.679	2
Boston	15	13	.563	6
Brooklyn	10	18	.357	11
New York	8	20	.266	13

Southeast Division

	L	W	Pct	GB
Charlotte	13	13	.500	—
Orlando	12	15	.444	1½
Miami	11	16	.407	2½
Washington	11	16	.407	2½
Atlanta	6	20	.231	7

Central Division

	L	W	Pct	GB
Milwaukee	18	8	.692	—
Indiana	17	9	.630	1½
Detroit	13	12	.522	2½
Cleveland	6	21	.222	12½
Chicago	6	22	.214	13

Western Conference

Southwest Division

	L	W	Pct	GB
Memphis	15	11	.550	—
San Antonio	14	13	.543	1½
New Orleans	14	13	.483	2½
Houston	13	14	.481	2½
Oklahoma City	13	14	.471	3½

Northwest Division

	L	W	Pct	GB
Golden State	9	6	.679	—
LA Clippers	17	9	.634	1
L.A. Lakers	17	10	.630	1½
Portland	14	13	.541	2½
Utah	13	15	.481	3½

Pacific Division

	L	W	Pct	GB
Golden State	9	6	.679	—
LA Clippers	17	9	.634	1
L.A. Lakers	17	10	.630	1½
Portland	14	13	.541	2½
Utah	13	15	.481	3½

Monday's games

	L	W	Pct	GB
Indiana	11	14	.455	—
Philadelphia	11	16	.407	2½
Boston	11	13	.467	1½
Atlanta	10	14	.429	2½
Memphis	10	15	.429	2½
Sacramento	10	15	.429	2½
L.A. Lakers	10	15	.429	2½
Phoenix	10	15	.429	2½

Tuesday's games

	L	W	Pct	GB
Portland	10	15	.429	2½
Houston	10	15	.429	2½
Phoenix	10	15	.429	2½
Memphis	10	15	.429	2½
Sacramento	10	15	.429	2½
L.A. Lakers	10	15	.429	2½
Phoenix	10	15	.429	2½

Wednesday's games

	L	W	Pct	GB
Boston	10	15	.429	2½
Atlanta	10	15	.429	2½
Memphis	10	15	.429	2½
Sacramento	10	15	.429	2½
L.A. Lakers	10	15	.429	2½
Phoenix	10	15	.429	2½

Thursday's games

	L	W	Pct	GB
Los Angeles Clippers	10	15	.429	2½
Sacramento	10	15	.429	2½
L.A. Lakers	10	15	.429	2½
Phoenix	10	15	.429	2½

Friday's games

	L	W	Pct	GB
Los Angeles Clippers	10	15	.429	2½
Sacramento	10	15	.429	2½
L.A. Lakers	10	15	.429	2½
Phoenix	10	15	.429	2½

Saturday's games

	L	W	Pct	GB
Los Angeles Clippers	10	15	.429	2½
Sacramento	10	15	.429	2½
L.A. Lakers	10	15	.429	2½
Phoenix	10	15	.429	2½

Sunday's games

	L	W	Pct	GB
Los Angeles Clippers	10	15	.429	2½
Sacramento	10	15	.429	2½
L.A. Lakers	10	15	.429	2½
Phoenix	10	15	.429	2½

Monday's games

	L	W	Pct	GB
Los Angeles Clippers	10	15	.429	2½
Sacramento	10	15	.429	2½
L.A. Lakers	10	15	.429	2½
Phoenix	10	15	.429	2½

Tuesday's games

	L	W	Pct	GB
Los Angeles Clippers	10	15	.429	2½
Sacramento	10	15	.429	2½
L.A. Lakers	10	15	.429	2½
Phoenix	10	15	.429	2½

Wednesday's games

	L	W	Pct	GB
Los Angeles Clippers	10	15	.429	2½
Sacramento	10	15	.429	2½
L.A. Lakers	10	15	.429	2½
Phoenix	10	15	.429	2½

Thursday's games

	L	W	Pct	GB
Los Angeles Clippers	10	15	.429	2½
Sacramento	10	15	.429	2½
L.A. Lakers	10	15	.429	2½
Phoenix	10	15	.429	2½

Friday's games

	L	W	Pct	GB
Los Angeles Clippers	10	15	.429	2½
Sacramento	10	15	.429	2½
L.A. Lakers	10	15	.429	2½
Phoenix	10	15	.429	2½

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Los Angeles Clippers	10	15	.429	2½
Sacramento	10	15	.429	2½
L.A. Lakers	10	15	.429	2½
Phoenix	10	15	.429	2½

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L.A. Lakers	10	15	.429	2½
Phoenix	10	15	.429	2½

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	L	W	Pct	GB
Los Angeles Clippers	10	15	.429	2½
Sacramento	10	15	.429	2½
L.A. Lakers	10	15	.429	2½
Phoenix	10	15	.429	2½

Wednesday's games

	L	W	Pct	GB
Los Angeles Clippers	10	15	.429	2½
Sacramento	10	15	.429	2½
L.A. Lakers	10	15	.429	2½
Phoenix	10	15	.429	2½

Thursday's games

	L	W	Pct	GB
Los Angeles Clippers	10	15	.429	2½
Sacramento	10	15	.429	2½
L.A. Lakers	10	15	.429	2½

NHL



Chris O'MEARA/AP
Lightning center Steven Stamkos celebrates his goal against the New York Rangers during the second period of Monday's game in Tampa, Fla. Stamkos earned his 700th point in the Lightning's 6-3 victory.

Roundup

Stamkos hat trick helps Lightning down Rangers

Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Steven Stamkos and the Tampa Bay Lightning are piling up points.

Stamkos had three goals to become the first player from the 2008 draft to reach 700 points, and the NHL-leading Lightning won their seventh consecutive game by beating the New York Rangers 6-3 on Monday night.

"Stammer is finding his groove," Tampa Bay coach Jon Cooper said.

Stamkos scored power-play goals that tied the game in the first and second periods.

The center completed his ninth hat trick and first since Oct. 13, 2014 against Montreal from the slot at 10:41 of the third.

"I knew it had been a while," Stamkos said with a laugh. "I don't know the exact date. I don't want to hear it."

The Lightning star, coming off a two-goal, two-assist outing in Saturday night's 7-1 win over the Colorado Avalanche, has 701 points in 696 career games. He joins Martin St. Louis (953) and Vincent Lecavalier (874) as the only Tampa Bay players reaching the 700-point milestone.

Ryan McDonagh had a go-ahead goal, Anthony Cirelli had the other two Tampa Bay goals, and Louis Domingue made 23 saves.

Kevin Hayes had two goals and Jesper Fast also scored for the Rangers, who have lost six of eight (2-5-1). Henrik Lundqvist

stopped 30 shots.

"To be able to beat some of the best teams, you have play really strict and smart, and make the right decision with or without the puck," Lundqvist said. "So, the next time we play a top team like this we need to do all those things."

New York defenseman Kevin Shattenkirk left in the second period with an upper-body injury. He took a check around the left shoulder and had a sling on his left arm postgame.

Rangers coach David Quinn had no update after the game on Shattenkirk, who was to be evaluated Tuesday.

Stamkos scored from the left circle while falling down at 6:19 of the second before McDonagh put Tampa Bay up 3-2 with 7:18 left in the period.

"Nothing kind of seems to phase us," McDonagh said.

Penguins 2, Islanders 1 (SO): Jake Guentzel scored the decisive goal in the shootout to lift visiting Pittsburgh over New York.

Guentzel also assisted on Derrick Brassard's tying goal in the third period, helping Pittsburgh improve to 3-0 in its last four games. Casey DeSmith had 25 saves through regulation and overtime.

Penguins star Phil Kessel beat Robin Lehner in the first round of the shootout, but Joshi Bailey scored on New York's third attempt to keep the tiebreaker going. Valteri Filppula was de-

nied by DeSmith before Guentzel closed out the win for Pittsburgh.

DeSmith improved to 6-1-2 in his past nine starts.

Anthony Beauvillier scored in the second period for the Islanders, and Lehner finished with 23 stops.

Red Wings 3, Kings 1: Jimmy Howard made a season-high 42 saves and Dylan Larkin scored his 12th goal of the season to lift host Detroit past Los Angeles.

Dennis Cholowski and Frans Nielsen also scored for the Red Wings, who improved to 13-6-2 in their last 21 games. Howard came within 6:38 of his first shutout of the season.

Anze Kopitar scored the only goal for Los Angeles.

The Kings, who are tied with Chicago for the fewest points in the NHL, have been shut out only once this season. They spoiled Howard's bid in the third when Kopitar tapped in a loose puck at the doorstep.

Sharks 5, Devils 2: Timo Meier scored twice, Joe Pavelski added his 20th goal of the season and host San Jose won for the fourth time in five games.

Radim Simek scored his first NHL goal, Tomas Hertl added a late power-play score and Martin Jones stopped 22 shots for the Sharks, who have not lost in regulation at home since Nov. 15.

Andy Greene and Drew Stafford scored for the Devils, who are a league-worst 3-11-2 on the road.

Scoreboard

Eastern Conference

	Atlantic Division					
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Tampa Bay	32	24	7	49	130	91
Toronto	30	20	9	1	41	109
Boston	30	16	10	4	36	81
Montreal	30	15	10	5	35	94
Montreal	31	13	14	4	30	105
Florida	28	11	11	4	28	93

Metropolitan Division

Washington	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Washington	29	17	9	2	37	106	90
Colorado	29	16	11	2	34	105	99
NY. Islanders	29	13	10	5	32	98	92
Pittsburgh	29	13	10	5	32	98	92
NY. Rangers	30	14	13	3	31	98	98
Philadelphia	28	12	13	3	27	86	101
New Jersey	29	10	13	6	26	88	105

Central Division

Nashville	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Nashville	31	19	10	2	40	107	77
Colorado	30	17	8	5	39	108	88
Winnipeg	29	18	9	4	38	101	80
Minnesota	29	15	12	3	35	83	87
St. Louis	28	10	14	4	24	78	87
Chicago	28	10	14	4	23	84	115

Pacific Division

Calgary	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Calgary	31	19	10	2	40	107	85
Anaheim	32	16	11	3	37	81	94
Vegas	32	17	14	1	35	96	91
Arizona	30	16	16	2	34	95	97
Vancouver	32	13	16	3	29	95	109
Los Angeles	28	13	13	2	28	73	76

Notes

Note: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division receive wild cards per conference advance to playoffs.

Sunday's games

Vancouver vs. Colorado, 1 p.m. Winnipeg vs. Philadelphia, 1 p.m. Boston vs. Ottawa, 1 p.m. Montreal vs. Florida, 1 p.m. Anaheim vs. New Jersey, 5 p.m. Edmonton vs. Calgary, 0 p.m.

Monday's games

Pittsburgh vs. New Jersey, 1 p.m. Toronto vs. Guelph, 1 p.m. NY. Rangers vs. Boston, 1 p.m. **Today's games**

Toronto at Carolina, 7 p.m. Vancouver at Columbus, 7 p.m. Arizona at Boston, 7 p.m. Montreal at Minnesota, 7 p.m. Ottawa at Nashville, 7 p.m. Chicago at St. Louis, 7 p.m. Florida at St. Louis, 7 p.m. Edmonton at Colorado, 7 p.m. **Wednesday's games**

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Vegas at N.Y

MLB

Baines surprised by Hall election; many others, too

By BEN WALKER
Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Harold Baines is aware many fans are questioning whether his credentials are Hall of Fame worthy. He's not sweating.

"Well, they can't take it away from me now, even if they don't think I should be there," he told The Associated Press.

A day after being elected to Cooperstown by a Hall-picked panel of 16, the six-time All-Star was at the winter meetings Monday for a news conference with newly chosen Lee Smith.

"I wasn't out there beating my chest and campaigning for this," Baines said. "I'm very honored and humbled."

Shortly after being chosen, Baines said he certainly wasn't anticipating this honor.

"Very shocked," he admitted.

So were many others around the baseball world.

In fact, in the hours after his selection was announced at the Mandalay Bay resort, a lot of conversations at the gathering started the exact same way: "Harold Baines?"

No one doubted Baines was a top player — 1,628 RBIs, 384 home runs and 2,866 hits.

"I had a great career. I'm very proud of it," he said.

But a couple of other numbers stood out, too.

Baines never drew more than 6.1 percent in five elections by the Baseball Writers' Association of America, far from the 75 percent required. In the key WAR stat compiled by baseballreference.com, Baines' lifetime total was tied for 54th.

Yes, 54th. Behind the likes of Placido Polanco, Jim Sundberg and Rafael Furcal in wins above replacement, not to mention Gil Hodges, Dick Allen, Don Mattingly, John Olerud and dozens more.

The vote by the Today's Game Era Committee was sure to spark renewed cries of cronyism at Cooperstown. Especially because the 16-member panel appointed by the Hall board included longtime Chicago White Sox owner Jerry Reinsdorf.

"I'm glad he was on that committee this year to help to get into the Hall of Fame," Baines said.

Baines spent nearly all of his first 10 seasons with the White Sox and currently serves as a team ambassador in their community relations department.

"So happy for Harold. He's a great player and a great human being," Reinsdorf praised in a statement. "I am so honored that I was a member of the committee. He deserved to be in long ago. I am just so excited."

He added Monday: "The numbers are there."

Tony La Russa, Baines' first big league manager, also was on the panel that elected him.

In the past, Phil Rizzuto and Bill Mazeroski were among the players who benefited from friendly faces on Veterans Committees to reach the Hall. That panel has been revamped over the years, and the Today's Game Era group was created as part of changes in 2014.

"The era committees were established as a sort of a court of appeals for an opportunity in the event that over time it was felt that maybe somebody slipped through the cracks," Hall President Jeff Idelson said. "And in the case of someone who received 6 percent of the vote in the BBWAA election, the reason that may have happened could be for many, many reasons."

It took 12 votes for election by the panel — Smith was unanimous. Baines got 12 and former outfielder and manager Lou Piniella fell just short with 11.

George Steinbrenner, Orel Hershiser, Albert Belle, Joe Carter, Will Clark, Davey Johnson and Charlie Manuel all received fewer than five votes.

Baines, now 59, had a smooth, consistent, left-handed stroke. But he never finished higher than ninth in an MVP vote, and never was among the top five AL hitters in the yearly batting race. His single-season high was 29 home runs at a time when lots of players hit more.

As this vote approached, his name drew little-to-no buzz in debates over who might be selected.

"I wasn't expecting this day to come," the career .289 hitter said.

Mattingly said he was happy for Baines, calling him a great hitter.

The Miami manager was a six-time All-Star, won nine Gold Gloves at first base for the Yankees and hit .307 lifetime. Mattingly was the 1985 AL MVP and four times finished in the top seven of the MVP voting.

Mattingly had 2,153 hits, 222 home runs and 1,099 RBIs in 14 seasons in a career limited by back trouble.

"I just didn't play long enough. Wasn't able to stay healthy long enough to really put that pile of numbers together," he said Monday at the winter meetings. "So there was a period of time that I could hit with anybody and do things on the field at my position and with the bat that nobody was doing."

"When I think of myself, when you see Harold, played 22 years or something like that and you end up with a pile of numbers that grow and grow," he said.

Baines became a designated hitter after knee trouble ended his days in the outfield, and DHs have struggled to gain backing from Hall voters.

Baines joined Frank Thomas as the only players in the Hall who spent more than half his games as a DH.



DAVID BANKS/AP

A person familiar with the negotiations says former Red Billy Hamilton and the Kansas City Royals have agreed to a \$5.25 million contract for next season that includes up to \$1 million in incentives.

Teams start to show cards as winter meetings begin

By BEN WALKER
Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Deal the New York Yankees in for the Manny Machado tournament. And J.T. Realmuto? A lot of teams already are sitting at that table.

The baseball winter meetings began in earnest along the Vegas Strip on Monday, and clubs slowly started to show their cards.

Noah Syndergaard and Zack Wheeler are attracting trade interest, the Mets say. Corey Kluber and Madison Bumgarner keep popping up in swap speculation. But still no indication of where hometown slugger Bryce Harper might go.

A couple of moves got done — speedy outfielder Billy Hamilton sprinted to the Kansas City Royals, pitcher Tyson Ross went to Detroit.

The Yankees, as usual, were on the prowl.

Always ramping up the rivalry with the champion Boston Red Sox, the Yankees linked themselves to Machado. General manager Brian Cashman said he's been talking to the infielder's agent.

"So we are definitely focused in on the marketplace on those areas of need and he, obviously, is available and solves that area of need," Cashman said. "So, not going to deny we've had a conversation. Or two."

Whether that's substance or merely a smoke screen, the Yankees could use help with shortstop Didi Gregorius expected to miss at least half of next season while recovering from Tommy John surgery.

Realmuto, the prized Miami catcher, is highly coveted.

"I think a lot of teams are talking to the Marlins. I would anticipate his market picking up while we're down here," new Mets GM Brodie Van Wagenen said.

Not so fast, countered Miami manager Don Mattingly.

"I look at him as part of our club," he said.

"He knows how much we like him and what we think about him. He's handling everything fine. J.T.'s a tough kid. He's a big-time leader. It's why we love him. It's why a lot of teams love him," he said.

Maybe Realmuto gets traded before the meetings end Thursday, maybe not. In the meantime, don't expect any movement on contentious MLB-wide

issues.

Sure, there's a lot of discussion about banning or limiting shifts. And plenty of debate about ways to offend spunks.

But in a sign that nothing is imminent, Commissioner Rob Manfred isn't planning to attend the annual gathering.

Also in play:

Now hear this

Phillies manager Gabe Kapler plans to be publicly critical of his players more in his second season after his team's late fade.

Philadelphia led the NL East in early August, then went 16-33 and wound up with its sixth straight losing season.

"One thing that I can do immediately that I think will really resonate well with our fans in Philadelphia ... as much as I illuminate some of the things we're doing very well, I can be a little more assertive in illuminating the things that we need to work on. And I'm committed to taking that step," he said.

A new pitch

The Seattle Mariners made an interesting move, claiming infielder Kaleb Cowart on waivers from the Los Angeles Angels and also announcing him as a right-handed pitcher. A prep star on the mound and at the plate, the 26-year-old Cowart has not pitched since the Angels drafted him in the first round in 2010. He hit .134 with 10 RBIs in 47 games with Los Angeles last season.

Opening up

Tampa Bay manager Kevin Cash will continue the strategy he began last season — namely, using relief pitchers to start games.

"I think right now we're discussing internally whether we do it two times through the rotation or three times through the rotation," Cash said.

Cash might move around more guys on the diamond, too.

"I'm personally a big fan of shifting. And I think we're going to see it, we've already seen the infield take over heavily. I think we're going to see more outfield shifting," he said.

NFL



MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ/AP

Oakland Raiders new head coach Jon Gruden, center, poses next to owner Mark Davis, left, and general manager Reggie McKenzie on Jan. 9. McKenzie was fired Monday with the Raiders sitting at 3-10.

Briefs

Mired in an awful season, Raiders fire GM McKenzie

Associated Press

ALAMEDA, Calif. — From the moment Jon Gruden was brought back for a second stint as coach of the Oakland Raiders with a 10-year contract, general manager Reggie McKenzie's longevity in the position was in serious doubt.

That only eroded more with each departure of one of McKenzie's prized former draft picks and ended when he was fired Monday, less than two years after he was named the NFL's executive of the year.

With the Raiders unable to build off that breakthrough 12-win season in 2016 and McKenzie's recent drafts failing to generate many impact players, the move to cut ties with McKenzie was made after Oakland beat Pittsburgh 24-21 for its third win of the season.

McKenzie's influence with the Raiders had waned ever since the triumphant news conference to welcome Gruden back to Oakland in January. Gruden got rid of several of the players McKenzie had acquired, most notably edge rusher Khalil Mack and receiver Amari Cooper.

Gruden said owner Mark Davis informed McKenzie of the move and the Raiders only issued a brief statement thanking McKenzie for his time in Oakland and wishing him well.

Director of college scouting Shawn Herock will handle the GM duties during the search process.

Vikings fire OC DeFilippo

MINNEAPOLIS — The Minnesota Vikings fired offensive coordinator John DeFilippo on Tuesday, following a 21-7 loss at Seattle on Monday night.

DeFilippo's first season on the job ended after just 13 games amid a sharp decline in production by the offense in the past six weeks.

Quarterbacks coach Kevin Stefanski was made interim offensive coordinator.

Stefanski will take over the play-calling duty from

DeFilippo, whose work with new quarterback Kirk Cousins didn't materialize into consistent success.

The Vikings have been held to less than 300 total yards in four of their past five games and have scored an average of 12.8 points in those four games.

Jags Marrone defends Fournette

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Jacksonville Jaguars coach Doug Marrone says running back Leonard Fournette was responding to racial slurs while yelling at a fan in Nashville, Tenn., last Thursday night.

Fournette declined to address the accusation in the locker room Monday on the advice of his agent.

Teammate and fellow running back T.J. Yeldon, however, said several fans directed racial slurs at Jacksonville players.

Fournette was shown in a video released by TMZ telling someone in the stands he was going to "beat your (but)" before two teammates pulled him away. Another clip shows Fournette near the bench yelling into the stands while Yeldon looks on.

In other NFL news:

- Bills starting linebacker Matt Milano will miss the final three weeks of the season with a broken left leg.

Milano had surgery for a broken fibula on Monday, a day after being hurt in a loss to the New York Jets. Milano was hurt when his leg became twisted in a pile after he stopped quarterback Sam Darnold from scoring at the Buffalo I with 1:22 remaining.

- Washington Redskins tight end Jordan Reed could be done for the season because of a strained toe muscle.

Raiders coach Jay Gruden said Monday that he thinks Reed was hurt on Mark Sanchez's high throw on his first pass of a 40-16 loss to the New York Giants a day earlier.

Gruden said "there is a level of concern" with Reed, who leads the team with 54 catches and 558 receiving yards.

Credit: Other playmakers' games impacted by Cooper

FROM BACK PAGE

There were plenty of second-guessers when Jones made the move at 3-5, with conventional wisdom saying the Cowboys had problems beyond a missing playmaker at receiver in the first season without franchise TD catch leader Dez Bryant, dumped in a cost-cutting move.

Prescott was on that list of issues, mired in a 25-game stretch of mediocrity and numbers sharply lower than those from his sensational rookie season, when Dallas set a franchise record with an 11-game winning streak and had an NFC-best 13 victories.

And while Prescott had two interceptions and a lost fumble to help the Eagles stay in a game the Cowboys were dominating, the display he put on with Cooper in the last half of the fourth quarter and overtime was remarkable.

Touchdown throws of 28 and 75 yards in the fourth quarter were followed by a 15-yarder on the first possession of overtime, with Cooper grabbing a pass tipped by Philadelphia's Rasul Douglas and cruising in from the 7.

"I knew he was good," Prescott said. "I knew he was going to get separation and get open and make great catches. But when you just see the run after catch and breaking tackles, and being that great of a player, I'm just thankful we got that trade."

Star running back Ezekiel Elliott is a beneficiary of Cooper's presence as well. The running lanes have been wider, and checkdowns against defenses preoccupied with the former Alabama

standout have been more frequent. Elliott had a career-high 12 catches against the Eagles.

"I didn't know we were going to get all that, honestly," said Elliott, who retook the NFL rushing lead with 1,262 yards. "But when I finally saw him in person, when I saw him catch the ball, I saw him run around and run after the catch, that's when I really realized he's truly special."

The Cooper acquisition is bringing back good — and bad — memories for Jones.

The good? An offseason trade for now-Hall of Fame defensive end Charles Haley in 1992, before Dallas became the first team to win three Super Bowls in four years. And the free-agent signing of Deion Sanders in 1995, before the last of those titles.

The bad? A pair of trades for receivers during the current Super Bowl drought. Joey Galloway was particularly costly because Jones gave up two first-round picks for not much in return. Roy Williams was a midseason trade similar to Cooper a decade ago.

It took Williams 21 games to get what Cooper has in six — an NFL-best 696 yards since Week 9. Cooper has six touchdowns. The other Dallas receivers have seven combined.

"He is making big plays," Jones said. "He is altering the defense. There is no question about it. He makes everybody better on both sides of the ball. But you got to make the big plays. You can see he is a difference-maker."

Jones has the pats on the back to prove it.



RON JENKINS/AP

The Cowboys made the move to acquire wide receiver Amari Cooper when they were sitting at 3-5 and in danger of falling completely out of the playoff race. Since the trade, they've improved to 8-5 and can clinch the NFC East title and a playoff berth with a victory Sunday.

NFL

Scoreboard

American Conference

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
New England	9	4	0	.692	364	293
Miami	7	6	0	.538	278	333
Buffalo	4	9	0	.308	201	320
N.Y. Jets	4	9	0	.308	270	330

South

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Houston	9	4	0	.692	323	256
Indianapolis	9	5	0	.652	320	260
Tennessee	7	6	0	.538	251	254
Jacksonville	4	9	0	.308	212	320

North

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Pittsburgh	7	6	0	.577	367	306
Baltimore	7	6	0	.538	321	241
Cleveland	5	8	0	.423	292	332
Cincinnati	5	8	0	.388	323	337

West

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Kansas City	11	4	0	.744	471	351
L.A. Chargers	10	5	0	.658	368	270
Denver	6	7	0	.462	290	282
Oakland	3	10	0	.233	244	388

National Conference

East

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Dallas	5	5	0	.515	276	246
Philadelphia	6	6	0	.462	324	332
Washington	7	7	0	.462	245	257
N.Y. Giants	5	8	0	.388	307	331

South

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
New Orleans	11	4	0	.744	447	283
Carolina	6	9	0	.462	324	332
Tampa Bay	5	8	0	.388	332	383
Atlanta	4	9	0	.308	316	367

North

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Green Bay	9	4	0	.692	359	247
Minnesota	6	6	1	.500	324	332
Green Bay	5	8	0	.423	315	307
Detroit	5	8	0	.388	271	319

West

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
y-LA. Rams	11	4	0	.744	425	313
Seattle	8	5	0	.615	340	266
Arizona	3	10	0	.231	178	327
San Francisco	2	11	0	.231	275	350

y-clinched playoff spot

y-clinched division

Thursday games

Sunday's games

N.Y. Giants 20, Jacksonville 9

Sunday's games

N.Y. Giants 20, Philadelphia 16

Miami 34, New England 33

Cleveland 26, Carolina 20

Indianapolis 24, Houston 21

New Orleans 27, Minnesota 14

Green Bay 34, Atlanta 20

N.Y. Jets 27, Buffalo 23

Kuwait 20, Baltimore 24, OT

L.A. Chargers 20, Cincinnati 21

San Francisco 20, Denver 14

Detroit 17, Atlanta 14

Dallas 21, Pittsburgh 21

Dallas 29, Philadelphia 23, OT

Chicago 11, L.A. Rams 6

Monday games

Seattle 21, Minnesota 7

Thursday, Dec. 13

L.A. Chargers 20, Kansas City

Saturday, Dec. 15

Houston at N.Y. Jets

Cleveland 20, Cincinnati 16

Sunday, Dec. 16

Tennessee at N.Y. Giants

Green Bay at Chicago

Detroit 21, L.A. Rams 14

Tampa Bay at Baltimore

Arizona at Atlanta

Oakland at Cincinnati

Dallas at Indianapolis

Miami at Minnesota

Seattle at San Francisco

New England at Pittsburgh

Philadelphia at L.A. Rams

Monday, Dec. 17

New Orleans at Carolina

Monday

Seahawks 21, Vikings 7

Minnesota 0 0 0 7-7

Seattle 18-21

Second quarter

Sea-FG Janikowski 37, 14:11.

Fourth quarter

Sea-C 2 run (Lockett pass from R.Wilson), 2:53.

Vikings 29 fumble return (Janikowski kick), 2:35.

Min-C 20 Cook 6 from Cousins (Baley 10, Cook 1:10).

Sea-T 21 Cook 10 (Baley 1:0).

Min-Sea 15 19

Total Net Yards 272 241

Rushes-Yards 21-77 42-214

Passing-Yards 199 153

Punt Returns 0-0 3-0

Kickoff Returns 3-64 3-64

Interceptions-Ret. 1-3 0-0

Completions 20-33 10-20

Sacks-Gardner 2-9 2-12

Punts 5-42.6 5-44.0

Penalties-Lost 11-1 0-0

Punt>Returns-Yards 45-1 47-0

Time of Possession 28:11 31:19

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING—Mike Davis 13-55,

Thielen 18, Diggs 1-5, Cousins 3-5, Mur-

ray 3-4, Seattle 23-29, R.Wilson

20-33, Vikings 8-18, Wilson 10-20.

RECEIVING—Minnesota, Thielen 20-57,

Cook 2-7, Diggs 4-7, Treadwell 3-16,

Rudolph 1-2, Cook 1-2, Fan 1, Davis 1-5,

E.Dickinson 1-4, Brown 1-0.

Seattle 22-39, R.Wilson

20-33, Vikings 8-18, Wilson 10-20.

RECEIVING—Minnesota, Thielen 20-57,

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Rudolph 1-2, Cook 1-2, Fan 1, Davis 1-5,

E.Dickinson 1-4, Brown 1-0.

PASSED—Mike Cousins 13-55,

Thielen 8-44, Davis 3-22, Lockett 5-

(minus 3).

PASSED—Mike Cousins 20-33,

Wilson 8-18, Wilson 10-20.

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SPORTS



Winter meetings
Yankees express interest
in Machado » **MLB**, Page 29

NFL

Credit Jerry

Trade for Cooper turned Cowboys' season around

BY SCHUYLER DIXON
Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Texas Jerry Jones is getting praised for a football move.

There might not be a better way to explain the impact of the oft-criticized owner and general manager's bold trade to Dallas, sending a 2019 first-round pick to Oakland for receiver Amari Cooper with the Cowboys fading fast in the NFC East race.

Cooper leads the NFL in yards receiving since joining the Cowboys, who have won five straight games to get to the brink of the division title and a home wild-card game.

With Cooper, Dak Prescott looks more like the 2016 NFL Offensive Rookie of the Year rather than a struggling quarterback. And Jones' name is coming up in broadcast booths, and as an off-the-wall choice for performer of the week in the NFL.

In other words, the primary object of ire for fans fed up with nearly a quar-

ter-century without a trip to the Super Bowl, or even an NFC championship game, is being viewed as someone who saved Dallas' season.

The Cowboys (8-5) can wrap up the NFC East with a win at Indianapolis (7-6) on Sunday.

"I think a big part of doing things with the desire to excel is to show them," Jones said after Cooper scored three touchdowns, including the winner in overtime of a 29-23 victory against Philadelphia that gave the Cowboys a two-game division lead with three to go. Dallas has the tiebreaker by virtue of a season sweep of the defending Super Bowl champs.

Jerry Jones Dallas owner/GM, on fans' reactions to some of the trades he's made. "I like this stuff. As a matter of fact, I make my worst grades when I'm being praised."

SEE CREDIT ON PAGE 30



PHOTOS BY RON JENKINS/AP

Dallas Cowboys owner/general manager Jerry Jones pulled the trigger on the trade for Amari Cooper, giving up a 2019 first-round draft pick to get him. Since joining the Cowboys, Cooper leads the NFL in yards receiving with 696.

Stamkos nets hat trick, earns 700th point » **NHL**, Page 28



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